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FE Week



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SKILLS SHOW SMILES

As this year's Skills Show got underway, patron and former Dragons' Den investor Theo Paphitis spent day one getting up close and personal with the have-a-gos on offer.

The entrepreneur met the friendly robot on display at the robotics showcase and tried out BAE Systems' virtual reality tour, as well as posing for selfies with some of the Skill Show's thousands of visitors.

See inside for more on the first day's action — including interviews with Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and National Apprenticeship Service director Sue Husband, news from the National Vocational Education and Training conference. The winners in the National Apprenticeship Awards are also revealed.

SEE PAGES 10 AND 11



Theo Paphitis meets the friendly robot

GAZELLE FOUNDERS STAND FIRM AMID COLLEGE WITHDRAWAL

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Gazelle's five founder colleges have re-affirmed their commitment to the organisation with the announcement that one college was set to quit the group amid claims it could spend membership fees better elsewhere.

Gloucestershire College, which has more than 7,000 learners and dished out around £130,000 in membership fees and staff training costs to Gazelle since it joined nearly three years ago, told *FE Week* it would not be a member next academic year.

"Following a consultation exercise with staff earlier this year, and the resulting launch of a new strategic plan, the college has decided that the financial outlay could be utilised more effectively in driving our enterprise agenda forward internally, using the talent and expertise of our staff," said the college's head of communications, Michelle Cant.

However, the loss of the college did not appear to have shaken the faith of Gazelle founders City College Norwich, North Hertfordshire College, New College Nottingham, Gateshead College and Warwickshire College. They responded to *FE Week* with a generic statement saying they "intend to remain [in Gazelle] for the foreseeable future".

The same statement was sent by City College Plymouth and Highbury College, while a spokesperson for Activate Learning said: "I can confirm that we remain a member and we do expect to remain a member to the end of the academic year." A spokesperson for Glasgow Kelvin College said it "continually reviews all subscriptions on an annual basis."

But a question mark remains over future involvement of the remaining 13 member colleges who did not respond to *FE Week*.

Gazelle chief executive Fintan Donohue said: "The membership of the Gazelle Colleges

Group has always evolved and changed — each year there are new colleges that join and a very small minority that retire. We have every indication that the vast majority of members wish to sustain their membership going forward."

News of Gloucestershire's impending exit comes after *FE Week* revealed that most member colleges inspected since joining Gazelle had not improved their Ofsted ratings, despite the fact its membership pumped a total of £3.5m into the organisation up until June, leading to criticism from the University and College Union.

Mr Donohue defended the organisation at the time, claiming "enrichment of student experiences and outcomes" was its "overriding goal".

Nevertheless, Gloucestershire College's spend on Gazelle services includes three years of membership fees at £35,000 per year and more than £26,000 for staff development and

student "educational experience".

Ms Cant said: "Our commitment to the entrepreneurial ethos of the Gazelle Group remains and will continue to be reflected in our future plans, alongside our focus on meaningful work experience through internships and volunteering. Our priority is delivering excellence and equipping all students with the skills for success beyond college, and we are grateful to Gazelle for the positive contribution and opportunities it has provided over the past three years."

No response was received from Amersham and Wycombe College, Barking and Dagenham College, Cambridge Regional College, Cardiff and Vale College, Carlisle College, City of Bath College, Lesoco, Middlesbrough College, Peterborough Regional College, Preston's College, South West College, City of Liverpool or The Sheffield College.

See editor's comment on page 6

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NEWS

SFA APPRENTICE CHIEF TELLS LORDS OF EMPLOYER WORRIES

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Skills Funding Agency (SFA) apprenticeships boss Sue Husband (pictured) has emphasised the need for employer involvement in standards but acknowledged concerns about “onerous” extra work for businesses.

Ms Husband, the SFA’s director for apprenticeships and delivery, appeared in front of Lords on a digital skills committee last week.

In response to a question about employer ownership of skills, Ms Husband acknowledged concerns raised by business about reforms, and said the SFA would help those who felt over-burdened.



She said: “We do see ourselves as a service, so as we have gone through this new approach with Trailblazers we have had the feedback from employers that they feel it’s probably too onerous for them to take full responsibility for updating [standards].

“However I would say that there has to be that employer involvement all the way through. It is for them to guide and advise what those standards look like and how they

change and get amended.”

Ms Husband appeared alongside City & Guilds chief executive Chris Jones (pictured), who called for better careers advice and Siemens head of professional education Martin Hottass, who warned that colleges struggling to fund specialist lecturers were failing to meet demand from companies like his.

Mr Jones said: “I think to expect a teacher in a school of 14-year-olds to give good, high quality careers advice and guidance is probably the job from hell. It’s not one I expect them to do, so that is one of the problems.

“But I think more broadly, one of the issues that I have is that

there doesn’t seem to be any clear sense of accountability or consistency around careers advice and guidance today.”

Mr Hottass said: “We only have engineering apprentices and we only contract with eight colleges in the UK because the majority of colleges are not equipped to deal with what we need.”

Skills Minister Nick Boles is expected to give evidence to the committee on Tuesday (November 18) morning.

Clegg’s UCas-style 16 to 18 plan ‘already in place’

@SOPH_E_SCOTT AND @PAULOFFORD
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Government plans to launch a UCas-style vocational database by September next year have been short shrift by the boss of UCas itself.

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg (pictured left) told visitors to the Skills Show, at Birmingham NEC, that the government would set up a “fully-comprehensive national database” of 16 to 18 skills and employer led-courses and opportunities in England next summer.

Mr Clegg said on Thursday (November 13): “By giving access to a one stop shop for the growing number of choices they have, more young people will be able to access the options available to them and make better informed choices about their career paths.”

But UCas chief executive Mary Curnock Cook pointed out that the admissions service had already expanded UCas Progress, which caters for post-16 choices, to offer “national coverage of vocational and academic courses in England and Wales”.

She said: “We have more than 100,000 courses through 4,550



different providers listed in England and Wales and are already registering more than 2.5 million page views per month.

“This service builds on UCas’s 50 years of experience running a national service for higher education and is free of charge for learners.”

It was not the first time Mr Clegg has been rebutted by UCas on the issue.

Head of progress at UCas Gina Bradbury claimed in an *FE Week* article, published after Mr Clegg first mentioned the idea in February, that it was something her organisation had launched 18 months previously.

Matthew Dean (pictured right), technology policy manager for the Association of Colleges, said: “Providing a co-ordinated central database is a step forward in the way young people find out about the range of qualifications and courses available to them.

“The Deputy Prime Minister is right to recognise that vocational education is not a poor relation when choosing a career path.

“Increasing the number and choice of apprenticeships is important, but



FE WEEK NEWS IN BRIEF

Annual report date

The first FE Commissioner annual report is due out later this month, Skills Minister Nick Boles has revealed.

Dr David Collins’s office has visited more than a dozen struggling colleges since he was appointed last November.

His annual report is expected to summarise his recommendations along with updates on progress. Mr Boles wrote to all colleges on Monday last week (November 10) with news of Dr Collins’ annual report. It was the minister’s second letter to the sector after his initial correspondence on July 23.

College fracking home

Blackpool and The Fylde College has been unveiled as the home of the latest national college.

UKOOG, the representative body for the UK onshore oil and gas industry, will establish the hub for fracking at the college, which will train engineers. It is the third to be announced by government after plans for nuclear high speed rail colleges.

The grade one college will deliver qualifications from A-level equivalent up to postgraduate degree level, train teachers and regulators and accredit training and academic courses run elsewhere.

UTC reasonable progress

Inadequate-rated Central Bedfordshire UTC is “making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures” since Bedford College took over, according to a second Ofsted monitoring visit report.

The UTC was inspected in June and a monitoring visit in July declared its improvement plan unfit for purpose.

Bedford College stepped in and its new improvement plan was deemed fit for purpose following last month’s second monitoring visit.

NEWS

FE Commissioner gets five ex-principal advisers

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These are the five former principals and one ex-vice principal that make up the new intake of advisers for FE Commissioner Dr David Collins (pictured front), *FE Week* can reveal.

Phil Frier, Dr Beri Hare, John Hogg, Steve Hutchinson, Chris Jones and Lynne Craig have won posts at the commissioner’s office.

Their appointments take the total number to advisers to 11, with existing advisers David Williams, Joanna Gaukroger, Marilyn Hawkins, Malcolm Cooper and Lynn Forrester-Walker.

The appointments continue with Dr Collins’s focus on leadership, with all six of the new appointees having worked in principal or vice-principal posts, and at least three having worked in colleges where they were appointed to sort out problems with finances or quality.

Phil Frier led Park College Eastbourne, Sussex Downs College and City College Brighton before being appointed to head debt-ridden K College, which was broken up on his recommendation.

Dr Beri Hare, who currently lists herself on LinkedIn as an educational consultant, was principal at Stroud College in Gloucestershire from 2006 until its merger with Filton



College near Bristol in 2012. She was awarded the OBE for her services to further education in 2011.

Steve Hutchinson is a member of FE Associates and worked for a brief period as interim principal at K College, succeeding Mr Frier. He was a senior education advisory manager for KPMG and a regional finance

Confederation ends after a year

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The Gateshead and Middlesbrough College Confederation has been terminated after just 12 months.

The two colleges came together in September last year to pool resources and ideas, but are now preparing to split after governors decided the partnership did not “offer additional value to learners”.

The move casts doubt over the future of confederation chief executive Mike Hopkins, who is also chair of the Principals’ Professional Council, with Zoe Lewis having replaced him as Middlesbrough principal after the colleges joined forces.

Both colleges declined to comment on what role, if any, Mr Hopkins would play at the colleges in the future. A joint statement from Gateshead College chair Robin Mackie and Middlesbrough College chair Bob Brady said: “Having undertaken a review we are in agreement that while we have seen some benefits, we do not feel that this arrangement offers additional value to learners at either college at this time. The two colleges remain firmly committed to the principles of working in partnership where it has clear benefits for our students, staff and stakeholders.”

The statement added that the confederation had been formed to “explore collaborative approaches which could benefit both colleges”. During that time we have worked together on a number of projects which have enabled us to secure funding for a joint technology initiative, share best practice and offer combined student projects,” the

statement added. It continued: “We are unable to say anything further with regards to Mr Hopkins at this time as discussions with him are ongoing.”

The end of the confederation was made public in minutes from a September 24 Middlesbrough College board meeting where it was revealed that “both parties had agreed to mutually terminate” the confederation agreement on September 10 this year.

In a press release issued at the time the confederation was formed, a spokesperson for the colleges said: “Those behind the move believe the colleges’ combined size, scale, vision and influence will make them more resilient to future challenges and both will benefit from a more regional perspective enabling them to deliver a responsive and comprehensive offer to North East businesses and the wider community.”

It added that the colleges would “work far closer, sharing ideas and collaborating on initiatives that will ultimately deliver even higher standards of training and skills provision”.

The move comes after the FE Commissioner David Collins told three struggling colleges — Bicton College, Norton Radstock College and Stratford-upon-Avon College — that they should join forces with other colleges as they might not survive on their own.

Devon-based Bicton has since revealed plans to merge with The Cornwall College Group by August, while the commissioner’s revisit to Stratford resulted in new hope for its independence after positive feedback from Dr Collins.

Mr Hopkins was not available for comment.

Sixth form college falls two grades to inadequate

Hartlepool Sixth Form College has crashed from a good to inadequate Ofsted rating.

It received a grade two rating in June 2010, but a report published on Thursday (November 13), based on an inspection in September, gave it the lowest possible mark.

The report said “too few students stay to complete AS courses or progress from AS to A-level,” adding “leadership and management are inadequate”.

It recognised that there had been a “period of instability at senior level” and the 1,000-learner college’s new leadership team, including principal Alex Fau-Goodwin, only took over in September.

Rick Wells, who had been principal since 2005, stood down in August last year. Carole Horseman was acting principal until the end of last academic year.

Mr Fau-Goodwin said: “The new team are very clear about the improvements that need to be introduced.”

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Party differences on FE and skills prove difficult to spot

Association of Colleges (AoC) chief executive Martin Doel took time out from his preparations for the AoC annual conference in Birmingham to speak to *FE Week* editor Chris Henwood.

He talked about his thoughts on the political parties in the run-up to the general election next year and also answered questions on a range of FE and skills issues including employer cash contributions reform of apprenticeship funding and Lep (local enterprise partnership) engagement with colleges.

“The difference between our pre-general election conference in 2009 and now, interestingly, is pretty much in terms of the headline policies — it’s hard to see the difference between each of the parties.”

Yes, it’s fair to say Association of Colleges (AoC) chief executive Martin Doel is struggling to differentiate between blue, red and yellow on FE and skills policy in the run-up to next year’s election.

“They each seem to be saying the same things around four broad areas — more and better quality of apprenticeships, greater devolution, higher quality 16 to 18 education and a focus on higher-level skills,” he explains, speaking to me just days ahead of the AoC annual conference.

These are, says Mr Doel, the four broad areas that will also provide key themes for discussion at the conference, not to mention content for his own speech to delegates tomorrow (Tuesday, November 18) morning.

“If you start to talk about what more and



Martin Doel outside the AoC’s central London HQ and, inset, addressing last year’s AoC annual conference

better apprenticeships could be, it seems to me that they’re missing some important points, that no government can create an apprenticeship — an apprenticeship has to be created with an employer,” he says.

“And they are also not saying what the consequences of the current reform programme we’ve had on quantity and quality are, and how that would roll out in terms of the propensity of employers to fund apprenticeships and take on more apprentices and how that’s going to be achieved effectively.

“We need to have a much more

comprehensive approach to this, about how you prepare young people to access a high-quality apprenticeship, how they become attractive to employers to be taken on as apprentices, and how you present the offer to employers to see that an apprenticeship is the route to have a more productive and high-quality workforce.”

They [main political parties] each seem to be saying the same things around four broad areas

He adds, on his second point: “When you come to the issue of devolution, after the Scottish referendum, everyone’s talking about more devolution and you get things like devo Manc — Manchester getting a devolved skills budget. Nobody’s quite saying to me how that’s going to work, or what the consequences are.

“If Manchester gets devolution, what does that mean for the rest of the system? How does that fit in with the Leps [local enterprise partnerships]? Everyone’s got a different level to which they are going to devolve responsibility and elements perhaps of the skills budget, but nobody is talking in any kind of precision about how that will be done, nor have they expressed any real



Martin Doel is interviewed by *FE Week* editor Chris Henwood

understanding of the consequences that may have for things like having a national framework for apprenticeships, but a locally-funded system.

“Nor has it been addressed how you will actually cover the cost of the administration in doing things differently and at 39 different places in the country, when colleges are delivering across Lep boundaries. The road is a lot more complicated than those people that make broad assertions in local government association or other organisations seem to realise.”

The third area in which Mr Doel sees little or no difference between the parties is 16 to 18 education.

“I don’t mean to argue against wanting better quality education for 16 to 18-year-olds, of course we all agree that, but again, what does it mean that young people are spending more time doing English and maths than the vocational aspect of their studying? There’s only so much you can fit into a curriculum,” he says.

“That probably means more young people only get to level two in the vocational aspect

of their studies by 18, which means if you want to get to level three, you probably need another year, which means they enter the twilight world of another 17.5 per cent cut to their funding to a rate of funding which is already 22 per cent below 11 to 16-year-olds.

“And the fourth area they are all talking about is the technician gap, and how we can deliver the type of skills that young people need above level three — above A-level — but short of full honours degree in a way that is flexible and allows part-time learning which is deliverable into the workplace, something much more employer-facing at those higher levels.

“So the Labour Party is talking about a technical degree. Well, how is that different from any other degree? Why would universities deliver it? And the government is talking about more higher level apprenticeships. How is the relatively small number of apprenticeships they are talking about at the higher levels going to transform and respond to the technician gap?

“I don’t see enough in the Trailblazers to make that scale of difference to our economy. So how do you make good on those broad aspirations and what they need to do, and in that latter one I think we’d say that colleges have had a much stronger, clearer role in doing that, and actually be incentivised to do that.”

Pre-conference Q&A with AoC chief Doel

Did you raise an eyebrow when you heard the political parties’ promises about the apprenticeship numbers they would deliver if in power after next May?

You’re into political rhetoric from people who only have limited understanding of what an apprenticeship is in the 21st century, but it’s a political-friendly policy.

From any number of dimensions, you can see why apprenticeships would be a good thing to ask for more of, but again you have to understand what an apprenticeship is, what the required characteristics are, and how you actually grow it.

People like Nick Boles or Liam Byrne will be the ones who, if elected, have to turn those things into reality. They are going to have to think hard about doing it, and I have to say, in terms of the current apprenticeship reform programme, we can already see the difficulties where Doug Richard’s apparently simple, straightforward recommendations are proving a little bit more difficult than

might be anticipated to turn into a reform programme. This is tricky stuff.

Were you happy to hear the softening of language from Skills Minister Nick Boles towards the cash contributions element of apprenticeship funding reform?

I don’t want to dissuade employers from taking on apprentices — that’s clearly not what you want to do. On the other hand, if you’re not going to have the employer contribution, which is the basis on which the funding has been agreed, the question becomes where do you get the money from? And therefore, how are you going to fund that many more apprenticeships if the employers aren’t paying one third towards it?

Your budget is then one third down from where it would be, which is kind of saying you can have a third fewer apprentices because you’ve not got as much to go around. So there’s a resource consequence for not having the money there. My great concern out of that would be that you’re going to try and raid other elements of the adult skills

budget.

What are your thoughts on the end of the Institute for Learning?

It’s hard to say where it went wrong, but I think the fork in the road was when it became almost a regulating arm of government and that was hard to reconcile with individual members paying for a service. From an AoC perspective, I don’t ever want to be in a position where I dictate to my members.

How do you assess the performance of Nick Boles as Skills Minister?

He’s refreshingly realistic about saying what he can achieve in what’s only nine months from the end of a governance period. I’ve found his pragmatism around English and maths to be refreshing and we need to continue to have conversations about that.

He’s said he wants colleges to be enterprising and take advantage of these freedoms that they have. I’d be a bit more quizzical about that insofar as my impression of this sector is it’s probably the most entrepreneurial of any within education.

Interestingly, he keeps saying he doesn’t know anything about FE. He knows a lot more and he is a very quick learner, but he can only carry on saying he knows nothing about FE for about another month in my estimation.

The FE Commissioner has recommended three college mergers following around 10 inspections. Are you concerned Dr David Collins might be too merger-friendly?

David’s not for or against mergers. He’s the ultimate pragmatist and he will do what he thinks is best in the circumstances and generally I haven’t found many arguments with the judgments he has made.

I think we need to think about how we support the consolidation process and you’ve got to begin to ask in some circumstances, why would a succeeding college, doing well in really strained times, volunteer to take on the liabilities and difficulties of another college, apart from an altruistic wish to do a good job for others?

It would be quite logical for a board of a college in those circumstances to say ‘Well, I support these students, this community, and I don’t want to put that at risk by going over the road to do that’.

I really do think we need to think about how we support the colleges that are stepping up to do the right thing to assist their colleague institutions that have got themselves into difficulty. I have argued that I think we need to talk about an innovation and growth fund where there is an amount of money made available to support how you can get innovative ways to actually survive

in the circumstances we are in and also grow from this position.

You mentioned you hadn’t had many arguments with the FE Commissioner’s findings. What were these arguments?

I think some of the public statements need to be carefully worded in order to retain confidence, while being properly challenging if he finds things that he doesn’t think is going right. There is an issue about retaining confidence in things like banks that invest in the sector, an issue about retaining confidence in people that are employed within the sector and also around confidence among those who access learning within colleges.

Making a statement about some of those colleges that have put themselves into difficulty always needs to be balanced with, ‘But the great majority, in difficult circumstances, are delivering high-quality’.

Do you have any concerns about the Ofsted proposals for a unified common inspection framework?

I kind of buy into the potential of a single inspection framework up to the age of 18 which is predominantly orientated towards directly delivered teaching in a classroom or an equivalent-type environment, but I have some difficulty seeing how it can apply as easily to post-19 and work-based learning circumstances.

It’s hard, for instance, to see how you would assess character formation at a college of an apprentice they only see once a week on day-release? Also, how can you can reasonably sample what a large college does in many different locations? I don’t quite see in that inspection framework how you would have a proper way of understanding responsiveness to local economic need and I don’t see that Ofsted has the expertise currently to make those kinds of assessments.

How do you assess the relationship between Leps and colleges?

All but, I would say, two Leps — and I’m not going to name the two — are now engaged with their colleges. The way in which they are engaged is different in every place. I’m much happier now that Leps are engaged with colleges.

We’ve now got to talk about the quality of that engagement and the quality of the conversations they’re having on both sides. I think without trying to lay down one model, I am interested in the notion of outcome agreements between colleges and their Leps, but I’d prefer that come from the college to say ‘This is what we’re proposing to do with the monies we have been allocated by government, does this seem right to you? Are there things you think we ought to be adjusting the mix around?’

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FE WEEK COMMENT

Where’s return evidence?

Regular readers of *FE Week* will know Gazelle is no stranger to our pages.

It is an organisation, made up of 23 member colleges, that claims to “develop innovative new learning models and new partnerships with business to deliver an improved outcome for students, their communities and the economy”.

It is also an organisation that has received millions in taxpayers’ cash from its member college budgets in the form of fees, “purchase of educational concept,” staff development and student activity costs.

All this despite no independent research to justify such spending by colleges.

But, again as *FE Week* readers will be aware, these are by no means new revelations.

And so today we learn of a member college that is to leave the organisation because it thinks it could spend its Gazelle money better elsewhere.

The five Gazelle founder members have decided to stick with their organisation, as have a number of non-founder members.

Only time will tell if it’s a wise move, but with every day that passes without that all-important evidence of a return on the huge sums invested, it will be an increasingly questionable one as well.

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TOP CBI CONFERENCE TWEETS

@truemagic68: In fairness Ed Miliband, at the CBI, has a point about further education. Less university & more skills and apprenticeships - He's right!

@cgtwine: #WebackEd Watching Ed at CBI 'A revolution in vocational education and apprenticeships.' Long overdue.

@stewartsegal: @CBI_ES @Ed_Miliband @AELPUK need to retain all levels of apprenticeships including level 2 entry points

@GrahamHoylez: @stewartsegal @AELPUK @CBI_ES @Ed_Miliband Dead right!Need apprenticeships at all levels inc 2, at all ages.Workplace training for all is key

@CBI_ES: David Cameron highlights the need for biz to encourage apprenticeships and “learning while you are earning” at #CBI2014 #betteroffbritain



Chief defends £93k Activate Learning rebrand

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The chief executive of a college group under fire for a £93,000 rebrand has defended the spend.

A Freedom of Information request by the Oxford Mail revealed that Activate Learning forked out £93,742 over the last two years on a rebranding exercise to move away from the previous name of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College (OCVC).

Activate Learning, which runs Reading College, City of Oxford College, and Banbury and Bicester College, rebranded in November last year.

The group, which also includes two University Technical Colleges (UTCs) in Didcot and Reading and its own apprenticeships arm in Activate Enterprise along with colleges in Saudi Arabia, spent £13,878 on polling and focus groups, £12,792 on “brand DNA” and £4,350 on the name Activate Learning.

A UCU spokesperson said: “I doubt we will be alone in asking for a justification of why £13,000 of public money was spent

on ‘brand DNA’ and what exactly that entails. The total spend is particularly galling when colleges are being told to tighten their belts and brace themselves for more funding cuts.”

However, Activate Learning chief executive Sally Dicketts (pictured) defended the spending. “The spending was justified,” she told *FE Week*.

“The governors said we must come up with a new name and we had to make sure we spoke to staff, students and across all our colleges and schools.

“It is not free when you do it yourself. If we had got our own staff to do it that still would have cost money. This was a job which needed to be done and we chose to outsource it.”

It comes after London-based college LeSoCo, formerly Lewisham and Southwark College, was criticised over a £290,000 rebrand which has since been reversed on many of its campuses.



But Ms Dicketts said the OCVC name needed to change when it expanded to include other establishments where the Oxford-related brand was unsuitable.

She said: “When we were OCVC, we took on responsibility for Reading

College, but Reading people were very unhappy about all the branding with Oxford on it. So were the people in Banbury.

“We were losing business because of the name. My role is to increase interest and make sure people want to come to us.

“We were going into a change and having schools for the first time and becoming a private training provider too and the governors said it was the opportunity to choose a theme which all stakeholders wanted and that wasn’t associated with the individual areas.”

Group director of marketing and communications Miriam Braham said: “A new group structure was proposed, including developing a new group entity and re-organising the existing campuses of OCVC to create two new FE colleges [City of Oxford College, and Banbury and Bicester College].

“The total figure quoted reflects our work ... across an 18-month period from 2012 to deliver significant pieces of work. This work included extensive consultation with our staff, students and external partners to ensure that our development was in line with customers’ needs.”

CORRECTION

Somerset’s Strode College got everything spot-on with a clean sweep of outstanding headline grades from Ofsted — unfortunately our coverage of the achievement was not quite so perfect.

It was, as pointed out by Collegenet director of training Bradley Lightbody, incorrectly reported that the grade one result was the college sector’s ninth since the education watchdog’s new common inspection framework (CIF) was introduced, in September 2012.

It was actually the general FE and sixth form college sector’s twelfth grade one result under the current CIF — of which eight were recorded by general FE colleges, including Strode, and four were from sixth form colleges.

NEWS

1,000 apprentices at

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Discount supermarket Aldi has revealed plans to create up to 1,000 apprenticeships as it looks to double its high street presence in the UK.

The German chain announced last week it was planning to double its UK store numbers to 1,000, creating up to 35,000 new jobs — around 1,000 of which would be apprenticeships, training towards store management roles.

An Aldi spokesperson said its £600m investment plan included the creation of “at least one apprenticeship position per store, per year, which would see the employment of between 600 to 1,000 apprentices each year as Aldi strives towards 1,000 stores.”

A spokesperson for the firm declined to said who its lead provider would be and would also not say at what levels the apprenticeships would be in.

However, he said: “Apprentice training and development will be supported by a new Apprenticeship Academy located at Aldi’s offices and distribution centre in Bolton, which is due to open in March 2015.”

Prime Minister David Cameron welcomed the investment while visiting Aldi’s UK headquarters in Warwickshire on Monday (November 10).

Mr Cameron said: “Aldi’s plans to create tens of thousands more jobs across the country are a vote of confidence in our long-term

economic plan.”

The expansion plan comes after Aldi has increased its retail market share to 4.8 per cent over the past few years as discount chains have attracted customers away from the ‘big four’ supermarkets — Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury’s and Morrisons.

Aldi currently has around 300 apprentices and the apprenticeship increase will place it far above Sainsbury’s — which said it had 200 level three apprentices training on its team leader programme.

By contrast, Morrisons has 2,600 level two and three apprenticeships across a range of job roles, including food production, refrigeration and management.

Tesco offers apprenticeships from level two in retail to level four in technology and in fashion retail.

A spokesperson said the company offered “thousands” of its level two retail apprenticeships, but declined to give more specific figures or comment on how many apprentices it had.

No one from Asda was available to comment on its apprenticeships, but its careers website claims it offers apprenticeships in retail to existing employees.

Unlike Aldi, none of the ‘big four’ recruit into apprenticeships roles — their apprenticeships are completed by existing employees.



Voc ed on party leaders’ agenda

Vocational education and skills was top of the agenda when top politicians addressed business leaders last week.

Prime Minister David Cameron, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and Labour leader Ed Miliband all spoke about FE when they addressed the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) annual conference in London on Monday.

Mr Cameron praised businesses for their role in securing 2m apprenticeship starts in this Parliament, and emphasised his commitment to taking the total to 3m by 2020.

He added: “The ambition I have is that all our young people, leaving school at 18 rather

than 16 should be thinking ‘which path am I going to take?’ Is it either a path to university and to a degree or is it an apprenticeship and the potential of doing a degree through that apprenticeship as well.

“I want to see fewer and fewer people leaving school and going straight into the workforce, or indeed, I want to see us almost abolish youth unemployment.”

While Mr Miliband said that a “revolution” was needed in vocational education to deal with a “discontent” among the British public, Mr Clegg spoke about the need for good careers advice and guidance.

Visit feweek.co.uk for more.

Second principal issues safety statement

A second general FE college principal in a fortnight has issued a public safety announcement following a safety scare.

Norfolk police are investigating a deliberate chemical spill at College of West Anglia on Friday (November 7) that left 30 students needing treatment and one in hospital.

The incident prompted principal David Pomfret to speak out to ease safety concerns.

“I would like to reassure students and staff that we have already started an internal investigation to support the police and will be leaving no stone unturned to ensure this matter is brought to a speedy conclusion,” he said.

The incident was initially thought to have been caused by a gas leak but police and fire service investigators suggested CS gas, mace or pepper spray was deliberately set off.

The incident came just days after Newcastle College principal Carole Kitching announced police would be patrolling its campus as 18-year-old Liam Lyburd appeared in court accused of planning to detonate a pipe bomb at the college.

Lyburd is due before Newcastle Crown Court on November 20. Meanwhile, a Norfolk Constabulary spokesperson told *FE Week* that no arrest had been made in connection with the chemical incident.

Organisation Profile: the Association of Business Executives (ABE)

If your college doesn’t already offer business-related qualifications, you want to expand your offer, or you want to recruit international students, then you can add ABE’s qualifications to your portfolio.



“Various funding options are available for ABE qualifications”

The Association of Business Executives (ABE) is recognised by Ofqual as a UK Awarding Organisation for qualifications. It offers Diploma level qualifications in:

- Business Management (Levels 3 to 7) with optional pathways (from Levels 4 to 6) in the Management of Information Systems or Financial Management as well as Business Management
- Human Resource Management (Levels 4 to 6)
- Marketing Management (Levels 4 to 6)
- Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Management (Levels 4 to 6)
- Business Start-up and Entrepreneurship (Level 4), and
- Business Start-up (Level 3 Certificate)

All ABE qualifications are on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Various funding options are available for ABE Level 3, 4 and some Level 5 qualifications (see <http://abeuk.com/colfunding.php>).

In addition, the Level 5 and Level 6 Diplomas for all programmes can be combined into a single Level 6 Extended Diploma qualification (so international students therefore only need the one visa).

ABE qualifications share many common units. This means that: (1) it is easier for you to offer a range of programmes, which will help your recruitment, (2) you can have larger, and thus more economical, class sizes, and (3) students can easily take more than one qualification or switch courses.

ABE provides extensive tuition support to colleges including:

- Study manuals for the main units available as (paid for) books or which can be downloaded for free
- Past papers, specimen exam papers and mark schemes
- Examiners’ reports
- Lecture guides
- Study tips

More than 80 universities worldwide (45 in the UK) officially accept ABE qualifications for entry at different stages up to Masters/MBA, and many more do so in practice, so you will be able to offer your students a clear progression to a local university.

ABE currently runs written examinations twice a year, every June and December, but is introducing Centre Devised

Assessments and Work Based Assessments for some units. These will enable your college to customise your offer to the local, and indeed international, market requirements. In addition, exemptions are offered for units from many other Awarding Organisations.

The Association was founded in 1973, and celebrated its 40th anniversary last year in 2013. It is also a membership body, and so students (and lecturers) can become an Associate, Member and potentially Fellow of the Association and thereby receive post-nominal letters (AMABE, MABE and FABE respectively).

ABE provides a wide range of support to its students:

- Student Focus, a quarterly magazine produced to provide them with the latest developments at ABE, along with study tips, feature articles, and other useful information
- Unlimited access to a database of academic journals covering all programmes (from Emerald)
- Free study manuals for the Level 4 to 6 diplomas in business management, and
- An online Members Area with tuition support information.

ABE is well known and established in Commonwealth countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, with students studying in their home country or in the UK. There are now around 50,000 ABE students studying across a network of 300 colleges worldwide accredited to deliver its qualifications. If you would like to join them, please contact the marketing team on 020 8329 2930 or marketing@abeuk.com.

Readers deliver policy demands as parties gear up for election

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More than 600 members of the FE sector contributed to *FE Week* general election manifesto.

After selecting 14 key policy ideas with the help of 35 readers, an online survey was launched to determine which pledges should form our manifesto in the run-up to May’s election.

On these pages and in a 28-page manifesto document published with this edition of the newspaper, we look at the 14 pledges in detail, the five that won the most support, and the sector’s reaction to the survey.

One education and training funding agency with merged funding streams along with funding stability over the course of a Parliament top the list of pledges in the *FE Week* election manifesto.

The remaining three most popular pledges to have made it into the select list were increases to the apprentice minimum wage, funding for training for all unemployed young people and free transport for full-time learners up to the age of 21.

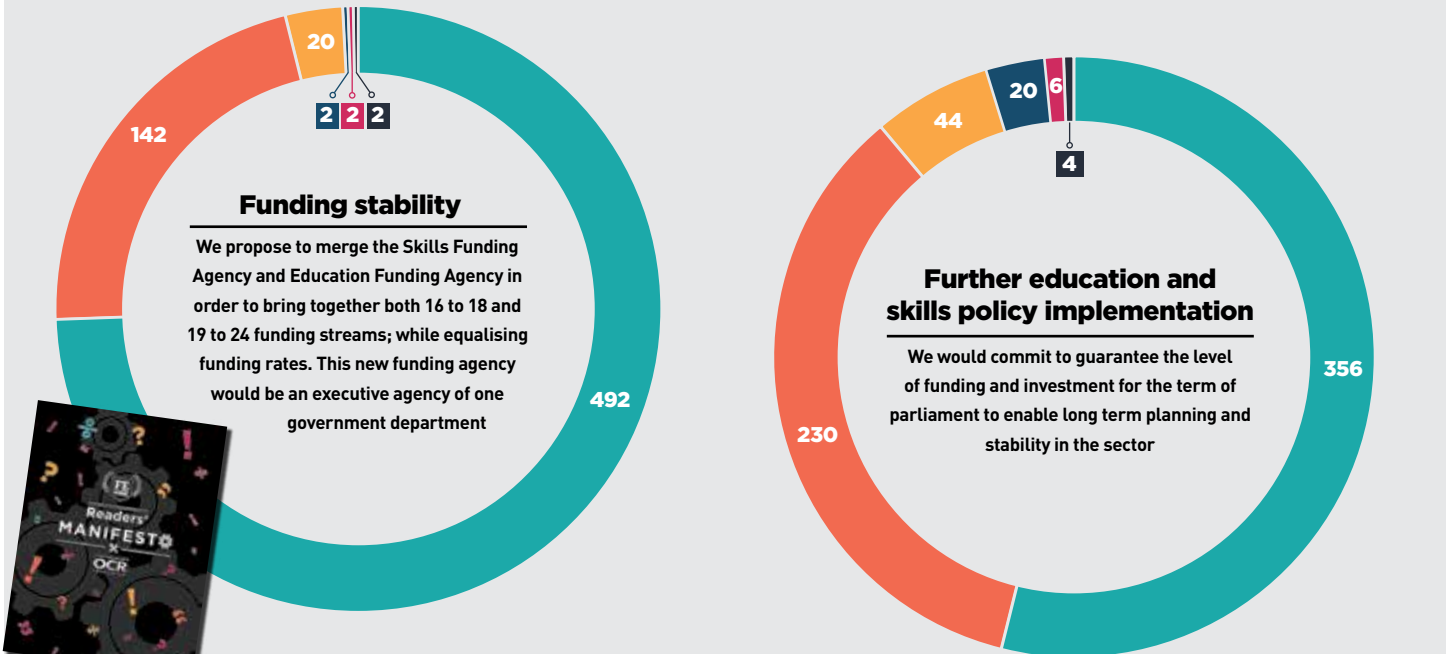
In a telling sign of our times, funding was the theme running through the most popular pledges, whether FE funding in general, for transport, to tackle unemployment or rises in the minimum wage.

Sector leaders welcomed the results of the manifesto survey, and the message was clear — money makes the FE world go around.

Martin Doel (pictured), chief executive of the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: “It is not surprising that the call for financial stability in the FE sector has been supported most widely in this survey. We can all appreciate that the government needed to make savings, but the FE sector seems to have had more than its fair share of funding cuts.

“Good careers education is vital to support young people at the age of 14 and 16 in making decisions which could affect their whole future. AoC, through its Careers Guidance: Guaranteed, has been campaigning for career hubs in each local

How the 660 *FE Week* manifesto survey respondents felt about the five most popular reader-generated policy pledges



area for the past year, and it is something we have already raised with Nicky Morgan since her appointment as Education Secretary.

“Colleges already work closely with Jobcentre Plus to provide education and training for the unemployed but this is one area where constant funding would be useful to allow them to plan ahead. Supporting adults who are unemployed to retrain is as important for that person as it is for the UK economy.”

Dr Lynne Sedgmore (pictured), executive director of the 157 Group, said: “As the voices of those working in FE, these proposed pledges deserve serious consideration. Two key themes — stability and equity — are present in many of the suggestions.

“The ability to plan for the long-term is vital, and a funding settlement for the whole of the next parliament would be a most welcome achievement. It is also right to call for different pathways through our education system — regardless of age and type of institution — to be treated equally, both in terms of funding and quality assurance.

“The most popular pledges are all about

ensuring an excellent student experience – by providing adequate financial support, by providing high quality advice and guidance, by guaranteeing teacher professionalism and by assuring the value for money of new providers. These principles cannot be argued with.”

Stewart Segal (pictured), chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), said: “It was interesting to note that the highest-rated issue was the need to establish some policy and funding stability in the sector. This is something we have continually campaigned for.

“We are therefore not sure that changing funding departments will deliver the coherence we need. In the past we have seen duplicated policy development even within the same department.

“We believe that the apprenticeship funding reforms will only work if employers are given a choice over whether they are directly funded or the funding is instead passed to their chosen provider.

“For tackling youth unemployment, we have to build the credibility of traineeships

which has to become the programme of choice for young people and avoiding new initiatives. Programmes for young people not in work should focus on high quality work related learning and work experience. This has to start with comprehensive careers information.”

David Hughes (pictured), chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace), said: “It is not surprising, in a time of great austerity, that the main focus for many people working in FE is on funding. But the longer-term game, and the real benefit of funding stability, is that it can provide the room for colleges and learning providers to invest in new, creative ways of engaging people in learning.

“We need to stimulate demand from people already in work to progress their skills, from people with very low level skills and low confidence and from employers. I hope that funding stability would give the space to help achieve that, because the long-term game for funding is about more employers paying and more people willing to invest in their own skills.”

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO OPINION
A review of 24+ Advanced Learning Loans	262	304	68	14	4	8
Evaluation of current system before committing to change						
Information, advice and guidance (IAG)	200	258	110	52	24	16
Funds to create IAG county hubs administered by LEPs						
EMA	190	176	124	92	64	14
Reintroduce education maintenance allowance for FT learners						
Teaching in FE	188	206	92	130	38	6
At least five years' industry experience and teachers' register						
Further education landscape	178	280	142	20	4	36
Review of educational models						
Abolish the UKCES and ETF	172	204	166	44	34	40
Traineeships	172	272	132	46	14	24
Review of restrictions on provider eligibility						
Protected status/term	158	196	180	54	36	36
Make 'college' a protected term/status						
Policy impact and creation	148	216	170	64	40	22
Create 'Office for Future Generations' to risk assess policy						



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Skills Show ‘light goes on’



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The third national Skills Show kicked off in Birmingham on Thursday (November 13) with have-a-gos, careers advice, skills competitions and the finals of the National Apprenticeship Awards.

At a dinner welcoming exhibitors, visitors and VIPs to the show on Wednesday, Skills Show patron Theo Paphitis said he was delighted to be returning for the third year in a row.

“The first time I came to the Skills Show, it was like a light coming on,” he said.

“Even as someone in business, I find as a parent I don’t always know how to advise my children on what they’re going to do with the rest of their lives, so having something like this is terrific.

“We should have been doing this years ago.”

As if making up for lost time, the first day of the show had more than 50 exhibitors and have-a-gos ensuring there was plenty to inspire the first batch of the Skills Show’s predicted 75,000 visitors, many from Midland primary schools.

Among the visitors was Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and *FE Week* caught up with him during his tour of the show.

“It’s been absolutely brilliant,” he said. “I was here for a day last year and I just really wanted to come back again this year.

“Yes, it’s a skills showcase but it’s also actually a celebration of a way of learning which I think we should do more of in this country — learning by doing.

“It’s about metaphorically and literally getting your hands dirty, learning things from the people who are mentoring you and learning some practical skills not just conceptual ones.

“We should be valuing both vocational and academic qualifications equally and I think that’s what’s on ample display at the Skills Show.”

Head of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) Sue Husband was also among the first day’s visitors.

“It’s just been so invigorating — that’s the word I’d use,” she said.



National Apprenticeship Awards nominees with Nick Clegg

“It just hasn’t stopped and it’s been brilliant seeing the young people’s faces — some of them were just getting so excited.

When Ms Husband spoke to *FE Week*, it was too early to tell how many visitors had passed through the NEC during the first day, but she said early indications suggested it had been “better than expected”.

“In terms of the timings, people are getting here earlier now,” she said.

“Usually there’s an hour or so at the beginning where it’s really quiet but it picked up straight away this morning and we’re pleased with that.

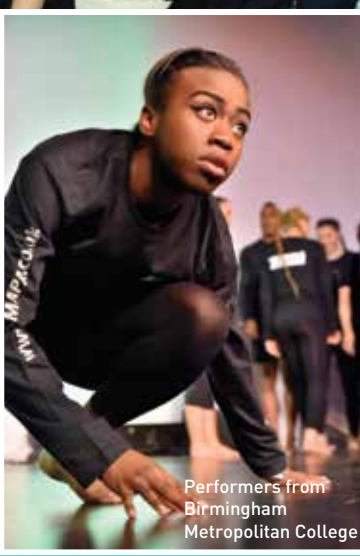
“And some of the stands that were probably not expecting that much interaction today because there’s been mainly primary schools were actually surprised by how many came and interacted on the stands.”

She added: “I know it sounds a bit trite, but meeting apprentices has been my favourite bit of today — although I did secretly enjoy meeting the *Strictly Come Dancing* stars.”



Skills Show patron Theo Paphitis tours the show floor

For extensive Skills Show coverage, see the *FE Week* supplement due to be handed out at the Association of Colleges annual conference on Tuesday, online and also posted out to subscribers with edition 119



Performers from Birmingham Metropolitan College

WorldSkills champ Terron wins again

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg opened the National Apprenticeship Awards ceremony before WorldSkills 2013 gold medal-winning bricklayer Ashley Terron (pictured) claimed the apprentice champion of the year prize.

“The National Apprenticeship Awards really is one of my favourite events of the whole year,” Mr Clegg told the assembled employers, apprentices and sector figures.

“This night is always a celebration showcasing the talent, hard work and commitment shown by Britain’s top apprentices.”

“I was honoured and I wasn’t expecting to win,” said Mr Terron.

Mr Terron, whose father is also a bricklayer, said he was driven to achieve in his apprenticeship and to promote it to others by his headteacher, who questioned why someone as bright as him might do a bricklaying apprenticeship.

“I took a bit of offence, that he was questioning my family trade and me — even though I had my path set out,” said Mr Terron. “And I’ve always had that in my mind. That spurred me on to try to strive and achieve the next best thing and that’s kept me going.

“I’ve since got back in touch with the school and oddly he’s taken a U-turn on his stance on apprenticeships.”

He added: “I was lucky that I worked with my dad so I had a chance to try bricklaying, but

a lot of people don’t have that and more needs to be done to help people see what kind of opportunities are out there.”

Intermediate apprentice of the year went to Co-operative business admin apprentice Lois McClure, aged 20, who did her apprenticeship through Learndirect.

“I took an apprenticeship I didn’t really know what it was about they didn’t talk about it at school or college,” she said.

“I think I’ve won because I’ve just taken every opportunity I can. It’s amazing to win.”

Higher apprentice of the year was won by Hayley James, a Highbury College apprentice with IBM UK, while advanced apprentice of the year went to Anna Schlautmann, 21, a logistics apprentice with Alliance Learning, employed by MBDA Missile Systems.

Small employer of the year went to design company Blue Moon Creative, the medium employer award went to hovercraft designers Griffin Hoverwork and large employer of the year went to housing developer Barratt Development.



Highbury College, Portsmouth on the Hairdressing Showcase stage



A Street dance troupe on the main BBC stage



Singer Alex Moir on the main BBC stage

all pics : ©2014 Professional Images

Skills gap ‘between school and degree’

The Skills Show’s opening day also saw the publication of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD Skills Beyond School report at the National Vocational Education and Training (VET) Conference.

The conference took place alongside the Skills Show at the Birmingham NEC.

The report called for the UK to put workplace learning at the centre of vocational education, warning that there would otherwise be a widening gap between qualifications and the skills employers need.

Simon Field, OECD lead vocational education researcher said the report contained two key messages for the UK.

“One is the need to do more to provide intermediate technical and professional skills, beyond school but less than a bachelor’s degree,” he said.

“The second is to integrate work-based learning systematically into programmes.”

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) welcomed the report.

Michael Davis, UKCES chief executive, said: “We support the view that higher level vocational training must have a clear line of sight to a job. Employers must be as close as possible to training to ensure the skills people develop are the ones businesses need.”

Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel said: “As OECD’s report says, ensuring workers have basic skills is important, but what is even more important is that education does not stop when someone enters the workplace.”

He added colleges in England worked ‘with an average of 600 businesses and were “always ready and willing to do more.”

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Unified CIF ‘not money-saving exercise’

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Ofsted’s eight-week consultation on bringing an end to its independent FE and skills inspection regime comes to a close next month.

All education inspections would be “harmonised” under the proposed common inspection framework (CIF) for nurseries, schools and colleges from September next year, as revealed exclusively by *FE Week* at the start of August.

It is also proposing to halve the time between inspections of good FE and skills providers. Currently, good FE and skills providers face reinspection up to every six years if there are no concerns to trigger an earlier revisit — but Ofsted is looking at changing that to a “short inspection” up to every three years, unless concerns trigger one sooner.

The consultation further sets out proposals for four categories for judgements — leadership and management; teaching, learning and assessment; personal development, behaviour and welfare; and outcomes for children and learners.

With the consultation — available on www.ofsted.gov.uk — closing on December 5, Ofsted director of FE and skills Lorna Fitzjohn (pictured) spoke exclusively to *FE Week* to address concerns the proposals have raised within the sector.



What would the proposals mean for FE?

The proposals we have set out will be some of the most far-reaching reforms for education inspection in the last 25 years. At the heart of these changes are measures to help maintain and accelerate education standards in England.

We plan to introduce more frequent, but shorter inspections for good schools and FE and skills providers, with a clear focus on making sure that standards are staying high.

We are also planning to introduce a common inspection framework across all of our remits. The guidance in the handbook and the report structure will be adapted to suit FE providers. This will make it easier for employers and learners to compare providers and make informed choices.

What do you think is wrong with the way Ofsted inspects FE institutions at the moment? Is there any update on the negotiations about direct inspection of sub-contractors?

Ofsted has always played a vital role in promoting high standards so that the quality of provision improves for all learners. It is worth noting that more than nine out of ten providers said they were satisfied with how their recent inspection was carried out.

However, there is now a strong case for a more proportionate system where we move away from full inspections for good providers. Instead, we want a system based on professional dialogues between the inspectors and leaders, with a clear focus on whether the good standards are being maintained.

We understand that for some FE providers the use of sub-contractors counts for a substantial part of their provision. This is being looked at as part of the consultation and we are working to ensure that the quality of sub-contracted provision is included in any judgement we make about the provider.

Will there be a period of stability after these proposed changes are enacted?

Ofsted’s duty is to make sure that all learners receive the level of education and training that they deserve. For this reason, we are always reviewing the effectiveness of the way in which we inspect providers.

We understand that some teachers and trainers can feel uncertainty about what Ofsted looks for during inspection and this is something we want to avoid.

We will therefore be shortly publishing a ‘mythbusters’ document specifically aimed at those working in the FE and skills sector. This will dispel some of the rumours and hearsay about the inspection process and help sector workers to focus on what really matters — making sure they are giving learners the best education and training possible.

With the proposed move towards a single CIF, is there a danger that school specialists will inspect FE colleges, and vice-versa?

The move to a single inspection framework will in no way impact Ofsted’s ability to inspect providers. Those with experience in FE and skills will continue to inspect FE and skills providers.

A single framework will make it easier for

providers, including University Technical Colleges, 16 to 19 academies and schools with sixth forms, to know what they are being judged against. We feel this will benefit the post-16 sector as a whole.

One proposal is to make clearer our judgements on the different types of provision. For example, someone reading an inspection report for a specific college would be able to clearly identify the quality of any apprenticeships, 16 to 19-year-old provision or adult courses which it offers.

Once the new framework is in place we will issue, as is normal practice, a handbook for FE inspectors on how to interpret the framework for the inspection of FE and skills so that it clearly relates to the sector and the different types of provision offered.

Will the proposals result in any job losses at Ofsted as departments inevitably move closer together?

The changes we are proposing are about maintaining and improving the quality of education and training in England. This is not a money-saving exercise.

We have carefully costed the new model in relation to inspection resource and are confident we can deliver within our existing budget.

Reports of more FE cuts prompt AoC defence

Further education has already taken its “fair share” of cuts, the Association of Colleges (AoC) has warned amid claims another £48bn could be slashed from government budgets.

The organisation has called for a review of education spending after warnings in national media that cuts could spiral way above the £25bn suggested by Prime Minister David Cameron, and a former civil servant warned the situation could be tough for FE for another decade.

A spokesperson for the AoC told *FE Week*: “Fair funding for colleges is always something that is high on our agenda and forms part of our discussions with the three main political parties.

“So far the FE sector has taken more than its fair share of funding cuts and we’re calling on the government to carry out a once-in-a-generation review of education spending to ensure that all age groups get an adequate budget. More stable funding would allow colleges to plan in the longer term.”

Education and Training Foundation chief executive David Russell said: “We have known for some time the fiscal climate for public services will remain very challenging for another five to 10 years.

“This presents a huge challenge to those delivering public value with public funding. It is the reason why excellent leadership, management and governance are vital to success of the FE and training system.”

The Treasury declined to comment. See feweek.co.uk for more sector reaction.

Ofqual boss issues stability plea on Functional Skills

Ofqual boss Glenys Stacey has said qualifications should remain “as stable as possible” as Skills Minister Nick Boles looks at a Functional Skills rebrand.

Ms Stacey replied to a letter sent early last month by Mr Boles, in which he said Functional Skills would “continue to be one of the types of qualification that learners have available”.

In her letter, Ms Stacey welcomed the minister’s “clear statement about the importance you attach to Functional Skills qualifications”.

But, she added: “The brand of a qualification is important. It takes some years for qualification titles to become understood and trusted, particularly by employers and others who are not close to the education system.

“In general, our view is that we should keep the qualifications system as stable as possible, to allow qualifications time to prove themselves.

“We did a small survey of employers and others recently and found that employers in the survey had a broadly positive view of Functional Skills qualifications, as do colleges and other providers.”

See page 22 for an expert piece by OCR’s Charlotte Bosworth and visit feweek.co.uk for more, including a link to the letter in full.





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Tribal is currently the only publisher with endorsed learning materials for this exciting new, ASB-funded qualification. This course is designed to raise the candidate's awareness of some of the most common health conditions among older people in the UK. It explores arthritis, stroke, dementia, Parkinson's disease, and sensory loss (both hearing and visual impairments); as well as a range of strategies – some of which learners can put into practice themselves – that can help to improve the quality of life of someone living with one or a number of these conditions.

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AoC backs Ofqual plans to scrap QCF regulations

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The Association of Colleges (AoC) has backed Ofqual plans to ditch current regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

A consultation launched in July on the QCF, which was itself launched in 2008, proposed that qualifications should be regulated by Ofqual's general conditions of recognition.

A number of submissions from FE organisations, including representative bodies and awarding organisations, have now been seen by *FE Week* (see table).

AoC senior skills policy manager Teresa Frith (pictured), who submitted the response on behalf of the representative body, supported "efforts to reduce the amount of regulation".

She said: "All qualifications should be valid regardless of their structure but [we] recognise that, in some instances, the QCF regulatory arrangements have not supported this intent."

Ofqual stated in the consultation that it would not "impose design requirements about how QCF-type qualifications are structured [following the withdrawal of QCF regulatory arrangements]".

Ms Frith said: "This proposal should provide a welcome degree of flexibility in qualification and unit design."

But she raised concern that "the removal

of regulation might be seen as the removal of QCF, rather than allowing for a greater degree of flexibility to ensure 'validity'."

She warned scrapping the QCF regulatory arrangements "could be perceived as removing the ability to create credit bearing, unitised qualifications.

"A renaming of the remaining qualifications framework might be considered to ensure the sector remains clear that such an approach is not being prevented by the proposed changes to regulation," she added.

Ms Frith said the AoC would like "clear reassurance" that the regulatory reforms would not lead to the complete "withdrawal of



QCF from the system".

Jeremy Benson, Ofqual's director of policy, said: "This isn't the end for qualifications based upon the QCF. We expect those QCF qualifications which are good quality and valuable to remain. But where they are found to fall short of our requirements, we would expect them to be either developed or withdrawn."

Ofqual also asked for comments, through the consultation, on its plans for "QCF-type qualifications" to be "governed simply through our general conditions of

recognition".

Ms Frith said: "This appears to be a sensible way forward which should simplify regulation without removing the possibilities for easy accreditation of prior learning arrangements, unit assessment and the currency of credit. Any funding ramifications would need to be considered however."

An Ofqual spokesperson said it was still considering responses to the consultation that closed last month.

See page 24 for an expert piece by NOCN managing director Graham Hasting-Evans

Responses to plans to withdraw regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)	
Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)	Although AELP supports the principles of the QCF we are aware that many of its ambitions have not been realised and that the rules and design principles of the framework have sometimes constrained awarding organisations (AOs), hampering their ability to work with employers and providers in the development of high quality vocational qualifications (VQs)... We feel that closing the unit bank and ending the requirement for AOs to share units is a positive step forward for the sector. Making AOs wholly responsible for both the units and full qualifications they offer will nurture a real sense of ownership
The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace)	Niace remains, in principle, very supportive of an inclusive, credit based qualification framework. However, we recognise that there have been some difficulties in implementing the QCF... The new validity assurance process proposed by Ofqual will identify qualifications containing poor quality units and require AOs to improve or withdraw them... We agree that, for the time being, Ofqual should give AOs discretion as to whether to recognise credit awarded by another AO
Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB)	We understand that it is important for the regulator to revisit its arrangements for the QCF to ensure they are in keeping with the intended approach to regulation and do not present any barriers to AOs ability to ensure the validity of VQs... There have undoubtedly been occasions [in the last six years] where the requirements of the QCF caused tensions and challenges
City and Guilds	We fully welcome the review of the QCF. For some time, we have spoken openly about how the current QCF rules do not always support the development of the highest-quality VQs. In too many areas it is too restrictive, making it difficult to design relevant and rigorous qualifications and assessment strategies that really meet the needs of employers and of course the needs of individual learners and those delivering the training... It's vital that we maintain unitised flexibility where needed — but with a simple and consistent naming and branding that learners and employers can understand
Pearson	Pearson supports the long-term vision expressed in this consultation. The proposals allow for increased innovation in the design and development of qualifications and for AOs to take full responsibility for the quality of qualification content. However, in the short term, the dismantling of the QCF needs to be carefully planned to avoid the risks of both causing unnecessary confusion and having a negative impact on learners... We recommend Ofqual plan for a transition period of five years
Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)	We strongly agree with the proposal to withdraw the regulatory arrangements for the QCF. In fact, we have argued since the early test and trials of the QCF that the design structures proposed and put in place would inhibit rather than promote comparability of standards and innovation in qualification design. However, we strongly disagree with the need for new conditions of recognition and/or guidance. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 has at its core a principle that qualifications should be regulated through the recognition of AOs. The general conditions fulfil this purpose

NEWS

College issued warning over 'hand-to-mouth' finances

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A Midland college has been warned about its "hand-to-mouth" financial situation by FE Commissioner Dr David Collins.

Dr Collins visited Birmingham's 12,000-learner Bournville College (pictured), which has a current Skills Funding Agency (SFA) allocation of £8,495,746, in August after it was issued with a financial notice of concern by the in April.

In his report, published last week by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Dr Collins praised the leadership and governance of the college and the quality of the provision offered to learners, which was rated good by Ofsted after a visit in May, but said it needed to do more to balance the books.

He said: "The college has successfully improved its quality and diversified its income streams over the last few years. It has grown by more than 5 per cent per year and predicts that it will be able to continue on this growth path into the foreseeable future. However, while this is an ambitious and commendable approach it is not without its risks.

"Not all projects have delivered the returns forecasted and a failure by the college to address inefficiencies in parts of the college's operations has led to high levels of borrowing and serious cash flow issues.



"The present "hand to mouth" situation cannot be allowed to continue and there are opportunities to improve the position significantly if the college is prepared to bring its expenditure into line with sector norms. Fears that this will lead to a diminution of quality are not borne out by the evidence elsewhere."

He said new projects or ventures into new markets needed "to be considered with a far greater degree of scrutiny by the governing body" and added that the college's income base had "not been matched by an appropriate control of costs".

College marketing director Alma Aganovic said: "We welcome the feedback from the FE Commissioner and are already in the process of implementing the recommendations from the report. The college would like to point out that last year we achieved a substantial improvement in our financial position which is commendable in the current climate. We were also recently inspected by Ofsted and achieved outstanding for leadership and management."

Art space in £50m DfE refurb

A £50m tender to refurb the new Department for Education (DfE) HQ in London includes a gym and the creation of space for the government art collection, according to *FE Week* sister newspaper *Academies Week*.

The DfE announced in March that it was to leave the rented Sanctuary Buildings, in Victoria, and move its 1,600 staff to the Grade II-listed Old Admiralty Building (OAB), in Whitehall, by summer 2017. It claims the move will save £19m a year.

A tender for the refurbishment was put out last month offering the contract at a price tag of up to £50m, excluding VAT. It expects work, which will enable more staff to work in

the building, to start next November.

Bidders are asked to provide details of their suitability to carry out work such as "full refurbishment of the gym" and "creation of space for the government art collection".

The DfE said "no final decision" had been made on whether there would be a gym in the building and it was still in discussions about the artwork.

It also said refurbishment costs would be mainly met by the Cabinet Office through the sale of other government property. The size of the DfE contribution remains unclear.

Visit academiesweek.co.uk for more.

Fetl launches £100k collective grants

Further education organisations can apply for new £100k research grants from the Further Education Trust for Leadership (Fetl).

It announced on Thursday (November 13) that it was accepting applications for collective research grants.

Jill Westerman CBE, Fetl chair, said: "We would welcome applications from organisations with innovative and visionary ideas, particularly around leading learning and leadership for the future in our sector."

Former Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) chair Dame Ruth Silver launched Fetl over the summer with a budget of up to £5.5m of leftover LSIS funding.

Fetl invited applications for individual FE leaders to apply for fellowship grants in September and has now agreed on four candidates set to receive between £10,000 and £30,000 each. The four individuals are expected to start their research in the new year. Mark Ravenhall, Fetl chief executive, declined to comment on the identity of the chosen individuals nor their research topics.

However, he said: "We received 21 applications which were whittled down to a shortlist of six, before four were chosen."

Groups interested in FETL collective research grants should visit www.fetl.org.uk to apply by noon on December 12.

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PROFILE



BURNING PASSION FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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Neil Carberry’s relationship with education didn’t get off to the best of starts with his Edinburgh primary school burning down the day before his fifth birthday.

“I could see it from my bedroom window,” he says.

“And when you’re just about to turn five, that happening just before your birthday is a bit freaky.

“I remember sitting in my bed going: ‘Has this got anything to do with me?’”

The school was rebuilt as a much-needed special needs school so, Carberry says, “in many ways it was alright in the end”.

Carberry coped with the change in his education and, now director for employment and skills at the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), he has a refreshingly laid — back outlook on the changes gripping the FE sector.

“I think there’s an element of defensiveness in the sector about facing up to the coming

of a market, and some smaller employers are rightly worried about change — because businesses do worry about change,” says the 37-year-old. But he feels this anxiety is largely fuelled by providers.

“There are lots of small and medium enterprises which phone me up and say: ‘I’m worried about apprenticeship reform’,” he says.

“Funnily enough, they all say it in exactly the same terms, and they’re all worried about something that I don’t think is clear comes with employer-directed funding, and that’s red tape.

“And there are some providers who are telling small businesses: ‘All these meetings with the Skills Funding Agency I have to go to, you’ll have to do that if you get the funding’.

“That’s not what it’s meant to be — and actually, I see my job as making sure that that’s not what it is.

“If you get it right, the money flows to businesses to buy training, and you sweep away the red tape.”

Carberry tells me that, for him, FE

represents “opportunity”.

“It’s about how are we helping people to make the best of themselves,” he says.

“There are two ways of thinking in many political environments — it’s either we have to give more to people, or it’s laissez-faire, and actually it’s somewhere in between.

“It’s how we put in place the structures that people can help themselves grow — and in the past we had a history of doing that really well in apprenticeships, not mention HNDs and HNCs, widespread opportunities for people to build their careers — you can see it in my family.”

His father, Tom, started out as an apprentice printer, but moved into engineering.

“I feel very strongly about vocational education, partly because when I was a kid I didn’t see my dad on Tuesday and Thursday nights because he went down to Waverley station, got the train to Glasgow and went to do a HND,” says Carberry.

“Dad ended up as the chief executive of a major company, and he did it because he became a factory manager because he’d done

a HND in a college in Glasgow.”

The family left Edinburgh and moved to Cumbernauld, a new town north of Glasgow. “New town living gets a bad rap,” says Carberry.

“But you always felt that the development corporations felt slightly guilty pulling all these families out of central Glasgow and central Edinburgh, so they put on some fantastic facilities.

“Actually, the most trouble I have ever been in with my mum and dad was when we went out to play, my little brother Graham and I, and we didn’t come back for nine hours — and it wasn’t because anything had happened, it was just that we got so absorbed in what we were doing.

“And that’s probably a childhood that’s lost on my children, which is slightly sad.”

Initially, Carberry was convinced he wanted to study sciences but he says, “met a deeply inspirational history teacher, and ended up doing the arts instead”.

“The teacher was an ancient historian, and taught me Latin and Greek alongside my A-levels.”

As a result, he says, he’s “that rarity — a working class, comprehensive school boy, who ended up doing classics at Oxford”.

“I’ve seen the error of my ways,” he jokes, nodding to the current emphasis on science, technology, engineering and maths subjects, but it’s hard to imagine Carberry would have enjoyed it as much.

A self-confessed “political history nut” he frequently breaks off to add historical anecdotes — his favourite Roman general is Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus Cunctator, the man who “invented Guerrilla warfare”. He tells me this during a conversation about family pets.

Carberry also describes himself as a “sports nut” and a lifelong Heart of Midlothian fan — but it was his teenage love of rugby that introduced him to wife Alice.

“A friend of mine met my wife in passing in the corridor and they got to talking and she said her taste in men was Celtic rugby types, so he introduced us about five minutes later,” he says.

“She’s a damned good conversationalist — I talk a lot and in a very disjointed way, and

she kind of copes with that pretty well.”

The couple now live in Wallingford, just south of Oxford, with daughter Rowan, aged seven (“and a half — that’s very important,” he tells me), and son Tom, three.

After graduating from Oxford, Carberry found himself wondering what to do next.

He found himself working on the floor of a factory producing decorative card for five years, which he describes as “a fantastic little family-run business, really good grounding actually for the stuff we do at the CBI now”.

“I have actually been inside a business with 12 employees, I know what the difficulties are and I could see the effect it had,” he says.

Eventually Carberry decided he was “interested in people” and found a job at an HR consultancy for investment banks and investment managers.

He jokes that the job was “an opportunity to teach investment bankers how to behave like human beings”.

“It was really interesting and quite telling,” he says. “I met some fantastic people, and some I wouldn’t want to meet again.

“There’s an element of defensiveness in the sector about facing up to the coming of a market, and some smaller employers are rightly worried about change”

“My sense was there were people saying: ‘There’s a cultural issue here’ — it was just starting to emerge, and I left before it all went

south, partially because, if I’m honest, it didn’t feel real enough for me.

“After a while I thought, ‘You know what? Vocational education is kind of helpful...’ so I went and did a second degree, an MSc in industrial relations’.”

And a decade ago, following the MSc, he arrived at the CBI and after various roles, found himself at the head of its employment and skills division.

“Why am I here now? Because I went and did something more vocational,” he says.

“But in fact real sustainable growth requires us to have routes for people who can’t take a year off and sponge off their wife, the way I did, to do their vocational learning.

“It’s about making sure that what we’re doing is really relevant and that do people talk about vocational education as opportunity.”

It’s a role — combining his interests in politics, people and education —in which he seems utterly at home.

Although, he reflects: “I’m never happier than being in Heart of Midlothian’s stadium Gorgie, pie in one hand, pint in the other.”

It’s a personal thing

What is your favourite book, and why?

Around the World in 80 days by Jules Verne. I grew up in a new town in central Scotland, which I loved, but it can be quite dreary a lot of the time so travel seemed impossibly exciting, and I love to travel and Jules Verne was a kind of highway into that kind of thinking

What is your pet hate?

People who stop in front of you when you’re walking along — it really winds me up

What do you do to switch off after work?

I spent time with my family. We live outside London. I like to cook, and other sorts of inside things, and I’m a great reader of history, and I am an absolute sports nut. I’m a cyclist, but also I’m a massive football fan, and genetically cursed to follow the famous Heart of Midlothian

If you could invite anyone, living or dead, to a dinner party who would it be?

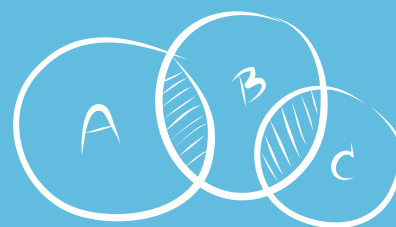
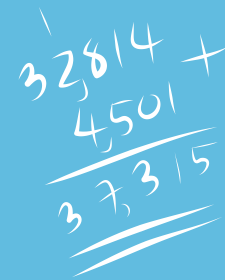
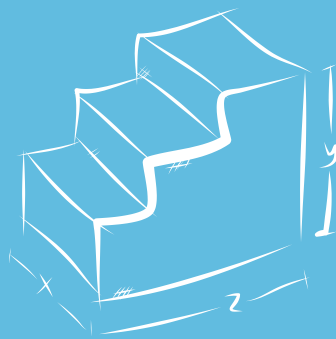
Political reformers Thomas Paine and Thomas Muir. I think I’d probably want one of the Pankhursts, because I imagine that they’d be good company at dinner, and Olympic athlete Jessica Ennis because I find her a very engaging and inspirational person

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

I had to deal with the crushing of my hopes fairly early on as I realised when I was about seven I’d only be wearing the famous maroon jersey of Heart of Midlothian Football Club from the stands and not the pitch. For a while I wanted to be a doctor, until I was about 16

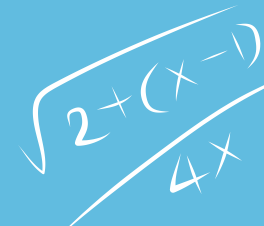
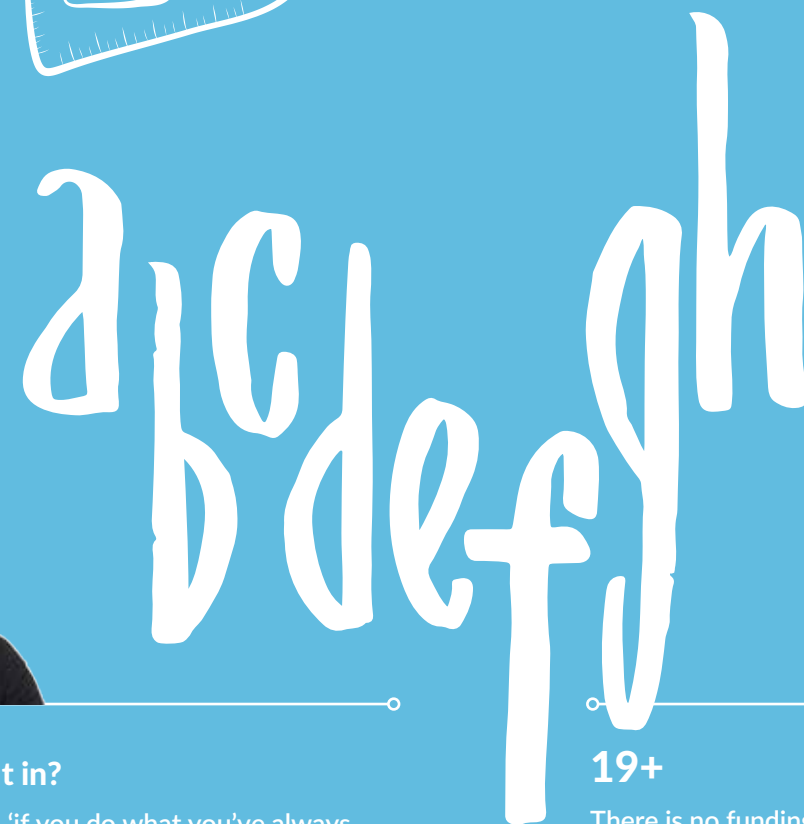


Above: Carberry aged 10 on a family holiday in France



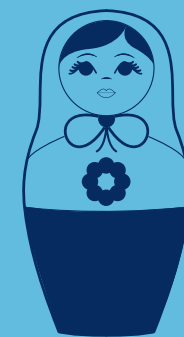
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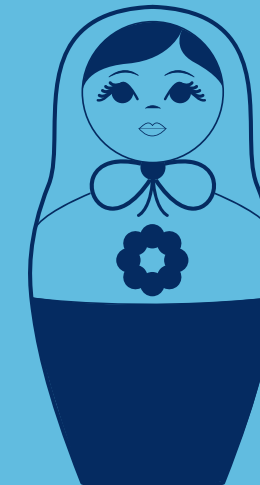
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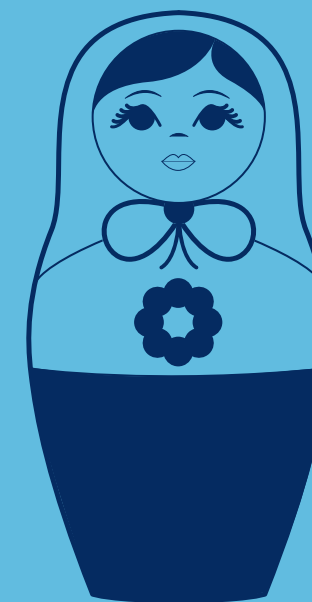


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We hope this quick guide will help you understand the funding picture and how you can build programmes that will help your learners effectively gain these vital skills.

16-19

In order to meet the funding condition, learners must be enrolled on a programme leading towards GCSE or 'stepping stones' qualifications i.e. Functional Skills English and maths or free standing maths qualifications.

Does this mean only these qualifications can be offered?

No. The flexibility of study programmes allows you to include other supporting qualification aims or non-qualification activity that would support the learners' broader programme.

How does English and maths fit in?

Well, you probably know the saying - 'if you do what you've always done, then you get what you've always got'. The same is true of English and maths learning. If a learner didn't get a C or above at GCSE on the first attempt - and the only intervention they receive is the same style and format of teaching that didn't work for them before - it's unlikely that they will progress.

An effective programme should identify the learner's gaps in their underpinning maths and English skills, teach them those skills and how to apply those skills in GCSE or how to develop process skills to lead to functional skills.

This is where Cambridge Progression comes in.

Cambridge Progression qualifications and units in English and maths are an ideal way to address your learners' underpinning skills gaps and help encourage them to progress to Functional Skills or GCSEs. Our approach means that your teaching can focus on the specific skills your learners need so they are able to progress with confidence.

19+

There is no funding condition for adult learners. Funding is available for:

- GCSE (including iGCSE) English and maths
- Functional Skills English and maths
- Free Standing Maths qualifications
- QCF English and maths units and qualifications

So, where does Cambridge Progression fit in?

The Cambridge Progression suite is a series of bite-sized units in the underpinning skills of English and maths. Units can be built up into Certificate qualifications for those learners that need a fuller programme to support their journey to GCSE or functional skills.

The whole suite of Cambridge Progression units is approved for adult funding. Individual units are available through the unit offer and larger qualifications are available as qualifications.

How do you know which units we might need?

That's the perfect question and we have the answer. We provide a free diagnostic assessment tool that identifies skills gaps, pinpoints appropriate Cambridge Progression units and can be used to measure progress from a learner's starting point.

And what's more Cambridge Progression units can be easily contextualised into other programmes so your learners can gain the English and maths skills they need while focusing on their main programme. It is both effective for your learners and can provide efficiencies in delivery.

For more information see ocr.org.uk/cambridgeprogression or contact us on 02476 851509 or email funding@ocr.org.uk



Making a case for the QCF

More debate is needed about the future of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in the face of plans by Ofqual to abolish it, says Graham Hasting-Evans.

We agree that change is necessary, but reliance on the General Conditions of Recognition (GCoR) as a replacement for an employer-recognised framework is inadequate to meet the needs of our economy and will, in our view, undermine public confidence.

We believe what's needed is a robust and consistent national qualifications framework for England, in effect an 'ENQF' (or revised QCF) for all vocational qualifications, including apprenticeships, which has the support of employers from all sectors of the economy.

Employers we've spoken with were completely unaware of these proposals. Employers, employees and also learners looking for employment, are the real 'clients' and therefore must have an input in any changes.

The case to withdraw the QCF is not evidenced by Ofqual's research and appears to misunderstand the QCF in several places

Employers have told us they want a robust national framework that they, their employees and learners can have confidence in. They don't see or understand the relevance of using the GCoR, or its place in apprenticeships.

Reliance solely on the GCoR could mean multiple 'Qualification Frameworks', which will further confuse and bewilder employers, employees, learners and training providers and result in a lack of confidence.

Employers value unit learning, as do learners, who have difficulty with or cannot commit the time for large qualifications. The consultation fails to understand the value of unit/modular/credit learning from the 'real' client's point of view.

Further concern is that the QCF proposals and the guided learning hours (GLH) proposals for 16 to 17-years-olds don't provide clear measurement for the size

of qualification that covers all age groups — despite the fact that many essential qualifications such as employability skills, including literacy and numeracy, cover a wide age range from school aged learners to adults.

The current 'common measure' of the size of a qualification is taken as 'credit' and used for adult funding. With some awarding organisations electing to stay with 'credit' and others not, it's unclear what will happen to adult funding if 'credit' is no longer the universal common measure. GLH proposals only cover 16 to 17-year-olds and don't give a comprehensive answer for all age groups.

A common measure is an essential component of a national framework. An agreed 'size' of qualifications and units/modules which can be applied regardless of whether they're delivered by traditional classroom techniques or by e-learning is what's needed.

We believe the case to withdraw the QCF is not evidenced by Ofqual's research and appears to misunderstand the QCF in several places.

For example, there's no evidence to show that the large number of qualifications on the QCF is due to the design. In our view, this problem stems from the large number of awarding organisations recognised by Ofqual.

There are international concerns too. Many developed and developing countries have established or are establishing their 'NQF' based on many of the current UK principles. The changes will mean we'll be out of step with many other major economies.

UK learner qualifications may not be recognised outside the UK, which could have a detrimental effect on people with UK qualifications just when they're trying to compete internationally for jobs. It would also be a major step backwards and potentially discredit the UK's technical and vocational education and training (TVet) system and qualifications.

The lack of a UK framework could disadvantage UK awarding organisations in bidding for international work. Without an 'ENQF'/revised 'QCF', other countries could consider that the UK system is 'second rate', therefore undermining the UK government's aim of encouraging UK awarding organisations to work internationally.

Under Europe's EQF the UK has an obligation to be able to relate its national qualification framework to the EQF structure. It's not clear in the proposals how Ofqual intends this to work, nor if the proposals in fact contravene the UK's treaty obligations.

What is clear is that a full debate is needed with employers, across all sectors, employees and learners on what is the best way forward.



Paving the way for 'much stronger' 16 to 19 apprenticeships and traineeships

Kirsty Donnelly was one of a number of witnesses to give evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee on 16 to 19 apprenticeships and traineeships this month. She outlines her evidence and explains what she wanted the committee to make of her views.

I recently gave evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee during a lively session on apprenticeships and traineeships for 16 to 19-year-olds. I gave them three recommendations about how to strengthen skills in the UK, but did they take them to heart? Well, we won't know until their report comes out, but if adopted, they'll pave the way for a much stronger system.

Firstly, don't ditch Trailblazers — but let's make them stronger.

Over the past couple of years, the apprenticeship system has come on in leaps and bounds. They are now available in a variety of sectors and at higher levels, meaning young people have more choices and more opportunities. But there is always room for improvement, which is something the Trailblazers are certainly pushing.

While there are some level two apprenticeships that certainly merit the 'apprenticeship' tag, for some this is not the case

So far, they have made good headway. That's why we need to keep the apprenticeships Trailblazers intact.

They have tremendous potential — but they need to be more aligned. For example, we need to see minimum standards for quality assurance and moderation across all industries.

And awarding organisations must be involved as early as possible when it comes to developing assessment strategies — while preventing new entrants from entering the market to deliver assessment services without demonstrating robust quality assurance processes and regulation.

Finally, we need to be careful not to label all work-based training as apprenticeships. While there are some level two apprenticeships that certainly merit the 'apprenticeship' tag, for some this is not the case. In these instances,

they would be more effective as a vocational traineeship, or as a vocational course that leads into an apprenticeship at a higher level.

Secondly, don't forget traineeships. But although traineeships are distinct and separate to apprenticeships — we must remember that they are a stepping-stone to an apprenticeship — that doesn't mean that they should be of a lesser quality.

They provide fantastic preparation, but they need to be refocused in two ways, so they can work more effectively with full-time post-16 vocational education.

For a start, trainees on a year-long level two pre-apprenticeship programme should be treated as employees.

And also traineeships should prepare young people for employment, by making sure that high-quality vocational training is part of the programme. Only then will they be a true route to progression.

Thirdly, stop the change for change's sake. My final message to the committee was about the need for coherence, consistency and stability in the skills and employment system.

City & Guilds' recent Sense and Instability report looked at the last three decades of policy in this area. No one in our sector will be surprised to hear that change has been extensive.

We've seen 61 Secretaries of State responsible for skills policy, 13 major Acts of Parliament, the responsibility for policy flipping between departments — or being shared between departments — 10 times since the 1980s.

How does that compare to academic education? There have been 18 ministers in charge of schools policy over the same period, and 16 in charge of higher education. So much change has left its mark on our skills system.

If we want a high-quality, highly-valued system, we have to learn the lessons of the past and stop change for change's sake.

Looking forward it's fantastic that the committee is making vocational education a priority, and I'm eager to see what happens next. It's also encouraging to see apprenticeships and traineeships being a firm fixture on the political agenda.

However, there are still other areas that need to be addressed alongside this. For example, there are still widespread concerns about the lack of effective careers advice and guidance for young people, and we know more needs to be done to provide young people with high-quality work experience opportunities so they are better-prepared to find employment. Apprenticeships and traineeships are just one piece of the puzzle — an incredibly important piece of course — but only by exploring the bigger picture will we truly see a long-lasting difference.

Learners have been discussing key policy directions for the NUS. Joe Vinson discusses what's been on the agenda and what happens next.

The NUS held its annual Zone Conference in Harrogate earlier this month. The event is an important part of our policy formation process and an opportunity for students from across the country to come together to discuss the issues which will form motions to NUS's National Conference in April.

The NUS splits its work in to five separate 'zones'. In Harrogate, students from the further and higher education zones were brought together to discuss vocational education.

It was the first time that the FE and higher education zones had come together to debate and form policy which concerns the whole tertiary sector. This was because we wanted to be more joined up in our policy formation this year and to talk about vocational provision across schools, colleges and universities.

In picking vocational education as a key theme we recognised that skills and the future of technical education are at the fore of current political debate.

Vocational qualifications have never been more important to the economy and to students. They deliver the trained, talented employees businesses are crying out for and ensure young people have the skills needed to succeed in education and work.

We wanted to give students the opportunity to voice their opinions on



Learners get in the zone

how vocational education is delivered and provide their experiences of studying in academic or vocational settings.

On the first day of the conference students were divided in to four areas of vocational education — teaching and learning, gender and access, tensions between vocational and academic education and the space in which vocational education is delivered.

Within these sub groups we talked about issues such as the impact of class structures and the perceived social stigma around technical courses and qualifications. We also used practical methods to think about the space in which academic and vocational education courses are delivered.

Students modelled their ideal learning environments and were encouraged to consider in what type of setting they can learn best.

All these discussions will eventually feed in to the motions which go to NUS's National Conference and also inform the work which takes places throughout the year.

Aside from the vocational education key theme, FE delegates attended workshops on

issues such as the quality of teaching and learning, careers information advice and guidance, sex and relationships education and the general election.

The session on teaching and learning asked students to think about their own good and bad experiences in the classroom. The students explored the different methods of teaching across the FE sector and particularly focused on the use of technology in the classroom and the proportion of learning which should be delivered via technology.

The conference also held a session for all delegates on NUS's general election strategy and the hub which has recently been launched to help students' unions form their local election strategies.

The 'New Deal for the next generation' manifesto outlines three key areas that students are most affected by, with ten policy 'asks' under each area.

The FE asks include a call for political parties to commit to a new education maintenance allowance, a call for the AS-level to be retained in its current

form and a recommendation for statutory careers guidance to be stronger and for careers education to be embedded in the curriculum.

Students explored the different methods of teaching across the FE sector and particularly focused on the use of technology in the classroom and the proportion of learning which should be delivered via technology

We have seen cut after cut after cut for the FE sector over the last few years and we want to make students a force too powerful to be ignored.

This is why it is so vital that FE students get registered to vote, get mobilised and demand from all the major parties that FE is properly invested in.



nocn

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Our innovative new Pathways to Adulthood study programme is designed specifically for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It will enable young people with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities to develop the skills they need for adulthood.

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NOCN IS ONE OF ONLY 21 ORGANISATIONS, AND THE ONLY AWARDING ORGANISATION, TO ACHIEVE LEVEL 3 IN LEADERS IN DIVERSITY PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DIVERSITY



Competition, finance and government support are just three of the factors to have played a part in the process of Lincoln College Group opening two sites in Saudi Arabia this summer, explains Simon Plummer.



SIMON PLUMMER

Managing director of Lincoln College Group's international operations

A college path to Saudi Arabia

College Group with export potential. As with many successful FE colleges, expertise in project management, human resources, marketing, finance, ICT, facilities and student services are all potential commodities.

There is a wide range of channels through which international opportunities are promoted, although very often the assessment of the validity of these opportunities is difficult and rightly many fail through sound governance and due diligence.

In the case of Saudi Arabia, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) first made us aware of the extensive reform of vocational education that was taking place in the Kingdom. This UK Government endorsement, combined with the global search being undertaken by the Saudi ministry, provided a high level of assurance over the integrity, longevity and reality of this opportunity.

The ambitious procurement timeline, and the potential of the opportunity, determined that a dedicated full-time resource and associated budget was allocated to the bid qualification and submission process. This investment, endorsed by the board, was

wholly at risk if unsuccessful, but aligned with the wider strategy of the board to seek out more diverse income streams and indeed a legitimate investment of surpluses made from our existing international work.

The initial brokerage of UKTI led to our direct dialogue with the Colleges of Excellence, the Saudi procurement body, with presentations in London combined with the requirement to submit early expressions of interest and organisational data to qualify for subsequent stages. Our progression through these stages resulted in more detailed briefing sessions in London, as well as Riyadh, and the hosting of a Saudi delegation in Lincoln.

Our journey started in September last year, with final bid submission in late December and contract award in March. Provided with brand new purpose-built campuses, the subsequent five months have seen us fully mobilise all equipment, furniture, staff and infrastructure, enabling two sites to open in late August. Our third will follow next year.

Appreciative of the financial restrictions of many UK colleges, the Saudi Arabian

authorities provide us with an interest-free loan for capital expenditure and, as a measure of the continued UK Government support, various grants are available through UK Export & Finance.

Lincoln College International is a commercial subsidiary within the group and our expansion internationally may be seen by some as simply a commercial decision. The diversification of income streams is clearly an important consideration, but deeper benefits must also be recognised.

We recognised that the curriculum was simply one of a number of strands of expertise that exists within The Lincoln College Group with export potential

Although not naturally falling within the scope of Ofsted, this does not exclude the international presence being used as a powerful source of evidence. The opportunities for staff development and progression now take on a different dimension; the potential for student enrichment diversifies and ultimately the sharing of the very best practice and opportunities for idea incubation multiply.



JAMES KEWIN

Deputy chief executive, Sixth Form Colleges' Association

Political parties offered seven opportunities to improve the lot of sixth form colleges

The Sixth Form Colleges' Association (SFCA) has produced its 2015 manifesto in the hope of influencing the political parties ahead of — and after — next year's general election, explains James Kewin.

With a general election just sixth months away, the Sixth Form Colleges' Association will today [Monday, November 17] officially launch its manifesto at its conference in Birmingham.

The manifesto makes seven recommendations to political parties on behalf of the 93 Sixth Form Colleges in England, that between them educate more than 158,000 young people.

Despite consistently delivering outstanding outcomes for learners, these are difficult times for many sixth form colleges.

There are a range of challenges facing the sector including funding cuts (on top of existing funding inequalities), curriculum reform (particularly the de-coupling of AS

levels from A levels) and competition (the proliferation of new, better funded sixth forms).

The speed with which funding and curriculum reform has been introduced, has created a fourth major challenge — uncertainty. For example, information on the implementation of the new style A-levels or how the mixed-economy of old and new style qualifications will be treated in funding, accountability or inspection terms has still not been provided.

This uncertainty makes strategic planning very difficult. At a practical level, it is difficult to know what to include in prospectuses, or what to say to young people at open days.

And the end of funding protection in 2015/16 continues to loom large — at that point many sixth form colleges will hit the ground with a bump.

At the same time, sixth form colleges see the relentless rise of free school sixth form colleges and school/academy sixth forms —

all better-funded, but on the whole delivering poorer outcomes for learners.

Despite being the most effective and efficient providers of sixth form education in the country, the sector feels — with some justification — that its face does not fit in policy terms.

The case for sixth form colleges is incredibly strong, but the past five years have seen brand (academy, free school) trump product (outcomes, value for money).

With that in mind, the manifesto contains a series of practical recommendations to ensure the continued success of students in sixth form colleges. We begin with curriculum.

It is difficult to find many organisations or institutions in the state sector that support the decoupling of AS-levels and A-levels — so our first recommendation is to reverse this change.

The sector feels — with some justification — that its face does not fit in policy terms

Teachers and leaders in practically every sixth form college believe that decoupling will make it more difficult for young people to progress to higher education or employment and will increase the risk of

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For over 100 years we've been helping people into a job, on the job and onto the next job.

We're relentlessly ambitious in our plans to equip the next generation of learners to build the UK economy. We need exceptional people to lead that journey and deliver results.

We're looking for four Portfolio Advisors, across different sectors, who can use their knowledge and experience to develop, maintain and manage relationships with strategic business partners and provide solid technical and practical support to customers, employers and other stakeholders across the sector, as well as internal teams.

All roles can be based anywhere in the UK, though you will be expected to travel extensively

PORTFOLIO ADVISOR (BUSINESS & DIGITAL)

Full time, two year fixed term contract
London: £45,900 - £56,100
National: £38,187 - £49,000

With relevant experience in business administration and/or digital industries you'll focus on newly emerging apprenticeship programmes.

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You'll need a high level of technical knowledge to lead on our engineering portfolio, with a specific interest in the 14-19 learner category.

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hr@gatewayqualifications.org.uk by 28th November 2014.

Director of Finance £70,000 - £75,000 (circa)



Closing date: 28th November 2014, 12noon
Assessment/Interview Days: 10th & 11th December 2014

This post is an exciting opportunity for someone who excels and wants to make a difference. The aim of the role is to make a substantial contribution to the College's financial business and strategic planning processes. Liaising with auditors, funding bodies and other stakeholders will be a significant feature of the role. This includes being responsible for reporting to governors on the financial health of the College and preparing reports to support their strategic decision making.

The successful candidate will be a designated senior post holder and a member of the senior management team. As such they will be fully involved in supporting managers to maintain the highest standards and to be innovative in both curriculum and service delivery. The role includes the further development of an effective framework of financial and funding process which have a positive impact on the student and employee experience to ensure outstanding financial health status.

You will work with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to support an effective and responsive outstanding College.

Please send completed applications with a letter detailing how you can contribute based on the above to recruitment@west-cheshire.ac.uk or by post to **Organisational Development & HR, West Cheshire College, off Sutton Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 7BF**. Shortlisting is scheduled to take place on 2nd December 2014 and assessments and interviews will take place on the 10th and 11th December 2014 (may be subject to change).

For further details please visit www.west-cheshire.ac.uk



Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College has been rated by Ofsted as Good with Outstanding features in October 2012 and ranked No. 2 in London for Sixth Form Colleges. We send over 600 students to university every year, 10% of those to Russell Group Universities including Oxford and Cambridge. We are an aspirational College, fast improving with the goal to becoming outstanding. Situated on an attractive 17 acre site in the London Borough of Waltham Forest the College benefits from excellent transport links. We are looking to appoint the following exceptional staff:

HEAD OF PROGRAMME MATHS

Salary: £41,558 - £46,795 p.a. inclusive of Outer London Allowance
Hours: 36 hours per week x 52 weeks per year
Start Date: January 2015

We are looking to appoint an enthusiastic, experienced and knowledgeable Manager who is also an excellent teacher, to lead and manage the team in both curriculum and staff development.

This post is a management post and you will lead on the development of the cross-college numeracy strategy. Other cross-college responsibilities may be developed based on your own skills and experience.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TEACHER & COURSE LEADER

Salary: £24,142 - £34,194 p.a. inclusive of Outer London Allowance
Plus remission time and additional professional payment may be negotiated depending on prior experience
Plus PSP of up to £5,272 for eligible candidates
Start Date: January 2015

We are looking for an excellent Teacher and Course Leader of Health & Social Care to teach and lead on the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Health & Social Care. Enthusiastic and motivated, you will build on the successes of the programme and help to develop the area. Experience in delivering childcare courses would be an advantage. You will possess excellent communication and team building skills and use your vocational experience to enhance the curriculum delivery. The role may also require you to be a Tutor.

MATHS TEACHER

Salary: £24,142 - £34,194 p.a. inclusive of Outer London Allowance
Plus PSP of up to £5,272 for eligible candidates
Start Date: January 2015

We are looking for a Maths Teacher to join our dynamic, friendly and dedicated team. We deliver a variety of courses including FSMQ's, GCSE, A level Maths, Statistics and Further Mathematics. The person appointed would be expected to teach on a range of these courses. A willingness to rise to the challenge and develop your skills is more important than experience, although experience is also valued.

ECONOMICS TEACHER

Salary: £24,142 - £34,194 p.a. inclusive of Outer London Allowance
Plus PSP of up to £5,272 for eligible candidates
Start Date: January 2015

We are looking for an enthusiastic, well-qualified and experienced Teacher of A Level Economics, with a proven track record of success, to join our large, well-resourced and supportive department. Economics has a long and successful tradition at the College, which we wish to see maintained.

You will have a strong academic background in the subject and ideally have recent experience of teaching the OCR specifications. It is expected that the successful candidate will be able to teach both micro and macroeconomics to AS students but also make a strong contribution to at least one of the A2 modules.

The post is currently fractional (0.4) but the ability to offer a second subject, such as Government & Politics or Maths, may enable a full-time post to be offered.

Closing date for all roles: 12 noon on Friday 28 November 2014
Interview dates: week commencing 08 December 2014

To apply go to: www.george-monoux.ac.uk/jobs

NUNEATON TRAINING CENTRE - Warwickshire

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Full Time 37 hours plus - salary £45-50K (negotiable)



We currently have an exciting opportunity for a highly motivated individual with previous strategic management experience to lead a dedicated team of staff for Nuneaton Training Centre. The successful person will have enthusiasm and drive and previous management experience which has indicated their potential to become an exceptional leader and manager. The post holder will be based in an established training facility in Nuneaton Town Centre. We offer a wide range of work-based government learning initiatives and are looking to develop opportunities further. The Company also owns a subsidiary company offering high quality training to employers.

The person will have an excellent understanding of contract management with a successful knowledge of priorities and development in the Further Education field particularly in work-based learning and apprenticeships. They will be expected to develop staff effectively to deliver high quality provision for young people, adults and employers. The role will also involve leading the team through Ofsted inspections to achieve continuous improvement.

The post holder must have a genuine commitment to quality improvement, having the ability to plan strategically and manage budgets and resources effectively. Applicants should have a high level of personal integrity with excellent communication skills at all levels. The role will involve supporting other managers to maintain the highest standards to be innovative in both curriculum development and delivery.

The CEO will report to a Board of Directors and be line managed by the Chairman.

Closing Date: 28th November 2014
Interviews week commencing: 5 December 2014
For more information contact:
Gary Scruby- Director - Tel: 07896949112
Email: gary@solvendis.co.uk
To Apply: go to www.ntcl.co.uk or contact Cheryl Palman-Brown tel 02476 386 074
email: cherylPB@ntcl.co.uk
Return applications to Cheryl Palman-Brown, NTC Ltd, Portland House, 16 Orchard Street, Nuneaton CV11 4BS

Looking for a new challenge?



Inspired by the rich heritage of the YMCA and energised by the possibilities that digital learning presents, CYQ's vision is to be a global education brand, providing always-on access to high-quality learning and assessment, and delivering industry-backed credentials that are a passport to a new career anywhere in the world.

We have new and exciting opportunities for talented, passionate and high-performing individuals to help us build and deliver our vision

Head of Products and Services (£45k - £48k) Central London

You'll be a strategic product management expert, able to translate a customer-focused product vision into robust plans and outcomes. You'll provide inspiration, leadership and make a hands-on contribution to all stages of the product lifecycle. Ideally you'll possess a track record in leading the implementation and adoption of product management principles and practices.


Head of Commercial (£45k - £48k + car allowance + commission) Home-based


You'll have a relentless focus on customer solutions and a track record in growing and diversifying income. You'll possess a rigorous understanding of the UK skills sector and ideally have a successful sales background across a broad range of education products, including qualifications, e-Learning and publishing.

Operations Manager (circa £27k) Central London

You'll be an experienced Operations Manager, ideally with a background in the awarding body or education sector. You'll have extensive experience in managing systems, projects and information resources and will be passionate about delivering excellence.

For more information and to download an application form go to <http://www.ymca.co.uk/jobs/> if you have any queries please contact greatstaff@ymca.co.uk
Closing date for all positions is: 5th December 2014





Principal

£90,000 - £100,000 dependent on skills and experience
Required for September 2015, or earlier by negotiation Performance related pay scheme and relocation expenses available

St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College is a very successful, growing sixth form college currently supporting c.1,200 full-time 16-19 year old students. It has a strong reputation for its Catholic identity, its community ethos and inclusive approach to sixth form provision. Students achieve well, make excellent progression and enjoy their time with us. Success rates are high and the College's finances are strong.

After 12 years' service as Principal the current postholder is moving on. This is a demanding and multi-faceted role and the Governors are looking to appoint a successor with the tenacity, drive and vision to build on the College's current achievement and take it to its next stage of development. The successful candidate will:


- Be a practising Catholic
- Have demonstrable leadership achievement and potential
- Have solid experience in the 16-19 phase
- Have the capacity to motivate staff and inspire young people
- Appreciate the value of the educational process in an innercity context
- Be fully committed to staff development across the institution

Closing date: 26th November 2014
Shortlisting: 2nd December 2014
Interview dates: 10th and 11th December 2014


Application forms and supporting information are available on the College website or directly from the Principal's PA, Debbie O'Sullivan, on extension 203 or dso@stcharles.ac.uk.

Prospective candidates who wish to visit the College and meet the current Principal, Paul O'Shea, are very welcome to do so and should make contact with Debbie O'Sullivan to arrange a visit.

St. Charles Square, London W10 6EY | Tel: 020 8968 7755 | Fax : 020 8968 1061



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We have an exciting opportunity for a Regional Operations Manager. You will have a proven track record of strategic leadership and management of operational delivery; driving change and continuous improvement to raise standards and achieving goals and targets. The role involves responding to and meeting the needs of employers and learners to positively enhance timely qualification success rates (QSR) and increase customer satisfaction rates.

Key Performance Indicators:

- **Strategic Business Leadership & Management**
- **Operations Performance Measures**
- **Compliance**
- **Quality**

You will have experience in a similar role and will have an excellent understanding of work based learning and funding as well as experience of managing in a learning environment. You will be expected to demonstrate an ambitious vision, have high expectations for what all learners can achieve, and attain high standards of quality and performance at all times.

In return we offer a generous reward package with a real opportunity for the right candidate to influence the business and add significant value. If you would like to apply for this position please send your CV with a covering letter stating why you are interested to Sally Connolly at sally.connolly@qube-learning.co.uk.



Richmond upon Thames College

Vice Principal, Curriculum & Learner Services

£75,000 per annum

At Richmond upon Thames College we are justifiably proud of our staff and students, who are focused on our vision of being "excellent in everything we do." Operating from a single campus with a current income of £20million, we attract our cohort of 3,500 learners from over three-quarters of London's boroughs. Our strong student outcomes and our inclusive, nurturing environment ensure that our College is an aspirational place to study.

Following the recent appointment of our new Principal we are now looking to appoint a Vice Principal, Curriculum & Learner Services to assist us with shaping our curriculum and developing our commercial offer, ensuring impressive results are delivered.

This senior post will provide an ideal platform for an aspiring and talented individual with experience of curriculum leadership and innovation to work as part of the Principalship team, which always puts learners first and is committed to delivering excellence. Working alongside the Assistant Principal for Quality, the post holder will be responsible for driving new ideas and curriculum initiatives to continue our journey towards becoming an Outstanding College.


The College is currently engaged in the planning stages of a major, ambitious redevelopment project (Richmond Education and Enterprise Campus) which provides for an exciting future for the College.

The successful candidate for this position will have an impressive record in curriculum innovation with the ability to translate vision into reality and to inspire staff, learners and external partners. FE sector experience would be beneficial, although we would consider strong individuals from other complex organisations, and a passion for education is essential.

If you have the vision, enthusiasm and experience to be a part of the driving force in our transformation please view our website at <http://aocrecruit.co.uk/rulcollege> where an application pack can be accessed online.

Closing date is Sunday 30 November 2014

Final selection for the post is anticipated to take place on Friday 12 December 2014.



New College Stamford

All round excellence

Head of MIS, Funding and Planning

This role offers an exciting opportunity for a motivated and enthusiastic professional that has the ability to lead and develop the MIS and Exams team to provide comprehensive, reliable, relevant and up-to-date information and reporting facilities, supporting a learner centric ethos.

Learning and Standards Manager – Skills for Work and Living

This role offers an exciting opportunity for a motivated, enthusiastic and learner centric professional that has the ability to ensuring a high quality, dedicated support and delivery service for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) at the College, ensuring a student focused ethos is at the forefront of the provision.

For the full job descriptions, person specifications and information on how to apply for this job please follow the link below

<http://www.stamford.ac.uk/jobs/> **Closing Date: November 23, 2014**

Recognising the potential of a diverse community New College Stamford is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) application. New College Stamford is a 'Specified Place'.

Easton&OtleyCollege

Vice Principal, Academic Easton & Otley College Salary circa £84,000

Easton and Otley College is a leading specialist College based in the Eastern region, with two outstanding rural campuses located just outside Norwich, Norfolk and Ipswich, Suffolk.

The College has a strong reputation for its land based, sports and public services provision with OFSTED grading the College "Good" overall at its inspection in November 2013. The College has excellent relationships with local schools with a large 14-16 vocational curriculum. The College's Higher Education provision is delivered in partnership with the University of East Anglia and the University Campus Suffolk and is seen as an important growth area. Easton and Otley College is a vocational specialist and has a close and productive relationship with employers.

Due to pending retirement the governors are looking to appoint a highly motivated Vice Principal, Academic.

Leading on the strategic development of our curriculum to ensure we give the best possible experience to students, staff and the local community.


Working with an enthusiastic staff team and committed governors the successful candidate will have a proven track record of developing staff to deliver the highest standards of performance.

We seek individuals with high levels of land based sector credibility to lead the College towards outstanding in all areas.

Closing date – 11th December 2014
Long List interviews week commencing 5th January 2015
Short List interviews 26th and 27th January 2015

For further details including job descriptions and person specifications visit the College website: www.eastonotley.ac.uk/other-information/jobs/ or call (01603) 731206 to arrange an informal discussion.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Lancaster & Morecambe College

Lancaster & Morecambe College is seeking to appoint an outstanding leader and experienced curriculum manager as a Senior Post Holder in its Senior Management Team. You may have aspirations to become a future principal, or wish to develop your career and contribute strategically in a high performing, financially outstanding vocational college situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty, where the quality of life provides the perfect balance to the hard work and commitment required to succeed in this key post.

Director of Curriculum

Salary £60,000 per annum, 37 hours per week **Job Ref: MS 772**


You will have current experience of managing a broad range of vocational curriculum in a Further Education College. Highly motivated and a team player, you will provide inspirational leadership to drive and develop our core provision, responding to the needs of our learners and community, and achieving growth targets. Your strong strategic and analytical approach will be accompanied by a values-driven ethos and excellent people management skills. As a Senior Post Holder and influential second tier senior manager, you will demonstrate professional credibility and integrity to the Board of Governors and within the College management structure.

If you would like to discuss details of the post with the College Principal, David Wood, please contact his PA on 01524 521289 to arrange a telephone appointment.

Closing Date: Friday 28th November


It is anticipated that interviews will take place before the end of College term, during week beginning 8th or 15th December 2014

For more information and to apply please visit: www.lmc.ac.uk (various formats available). We prefer to email job packs, however if you require one by post, please phone 01524 521507/email jobs@lmc.ac.uk. All posts are subject to a DBS Disclosure in line with our policy of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.



Clerk to the Corporation

£17,924 pa (FTE £35,848 pa)
18.5 hours per week



The College Corporation seeks a self-motivated and dedicated person with excellent communication, time management and organisational skills for the senior position of Clerk to the Corporation.

The hours for the post are 18.5 per week, however flexibility with these hours is required as Corporation meetings are held in the evenings, averaging about one per month, and you will be responsible for taking minutes.

There is the potential for the position to be full-time with other general administrative duties, the pro rata salary for which would reflect the role.

For an application pack, please contact Personnel at Plumpton College, Ditchling Road, Plumpton, East Sussex BN7 3AE, tel: 01273 890454, email: hr@plumpton.ac.uk or apply online at www.plumpton.ac.uk

Applications will only be considered on the College's application form.

Closing date: Thursday, 4th December 2014.



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Principal and Chief Executive

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As one of the largest and most diverse colleges in London, Lewisham Southwark’s ambition over the next few years is to become the capital’s leading FE College with a reputation for service excellence and for providing tangible outcomes for learners. With a revitalised curriculum linked to employer needs the College is building positive relationships, importantly with employer groups, the Boroughs of Lewisham, Southwark and Lambeth, as well as with schools and key stakeholder groups across South London. With ambitious plans to create the most modern and technically advanced learning environment for students, Lewisham Southwark is well placed to maximise the opportunities presented by today’s changing educational landscape.

Lewisham Southwark College is looking to appoint a new Principal and Chief Executive who will lead them at this challenging time for both the College and sector. You will work with Governors and lead senior management to develop and deliver a strategy that creates unrivalled opportunities for the learners through the delivery of a vibrant curriculum set against the highest standards of teaching and learning. This role will play a pivotal part in educational and employment outcomes across the region, bringing both a commercial acumen and political objectivity to raise aspirations and support students into higher education or employment, through exceptional outcomes.

You must be able to demonstrate a track record of success in a high profile leadership role, with a clear focus for delivering service excellence within a similarly complex and changing environment. You will need to be a proven and inspirational leader with



the professional credibility and strategic flair to engage and inspire, whilst displaying a commitment and passion to improving the life chances of others.

This is a unique opportunity to make a difference to the communities of South London and to influence the sector at an important time of change.

This appointment is being handled by Wickland Westcott. For more information, please visit our website at www.wickland-westcott.co.uk and view **job reference 6905** on the Current Positions page. For an informal and confidential conversation regarding the opportunity, please call **John Dodd on 01625 508100**. Interested applicants should send a detailed CV and covering letter to **6905@wickland-westcott.co.uk**

Important: Please attach an electronic copy of your CV to the email for processing by our automated application system. Cloud based documents (SkyDrive) are not accepted.

Any further enquiries should be addressed to ww@wickland-westcott.co.uk



Wickland Westcott

Cheshire | London | Yorkshire

www.wickland-westcott.co.uk



Set in the heart of the historic and beautiful market town of Stratford-upon-Avon, birthplace of William Shakespeare and home of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon College is an internationally recognised brand with a diverse student body.

Stratford-upon-Avon College is going from strength to strength on its journey to become an outstanding, responsive and thriving institution. We inspire our learners to develop their full potential and are committed to excellence and making a lasting contribution to the growth and success of the vibrant community we serve.

It’s an exciting time for us, which we would like you to be a part of, as we continue on our mission to be an outstanding College, with a clear focus and determination.

We are seeking to recruit passionate individuals to join us on our journey within the following roles:

- Lecturer in Business
- Lecturer in Photography
- Fractional Lecturer (0.8 fte) in Photography
- Lecturer in Acting & Theatre
- Sessional Lecturer in Acting & Theatre (temporary, part-time)
- Lecturer in Media Production
- Sessional Lecturer in Media Production (temporary, part-time)
- Fractional Lecturer (0.6 fte) in Engineering

- Sessional Lecturer in Brick (temporary, part-time)
- Sessional Lecturer in Digital Technology (temporary, part-time)
- Assessor / Instructor in Motor Vehicle (salary up to £24,607p.a, temporary, part-time)
- Associate Assessor – Electro Tech (paid per candidate based on £24,607p.a. temporary, part-time)
- Student Support Assistant (£16,814 - £17,290p.a temporary 22 hours per week)

Salaries for academic posts are based on £20,602 - £35,106 per annum, unless otherwise stated

For further information please visit our website www.stratford.ac.uk

Business Development Officer

Permanent & Fixed Term (Maternity Cover)
£29,255 - £30,795 or £30,136 - £31,723 (for those who live in London)



Permanent - East Anglia, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs, Beds and Bucks)
Fixed Term until February 2016 (Maternity Cover) – West Midlands area

A bit about us...

Passionate, market leading, and committed to changing lives through learning. Over one million learners at colleges, schools and training organisations across the UK have benefitted from NCFE qualifications over the past 10 years.

We believe that education can help every individual to achieve their full potential. It's what we stand for and it's why we're here. NCFE is an awarding organisation with a difference and with a heart.

Our people are at the centre of all we do and we're proud of our vibrant, successful culture which delivers exceptional customer service. In the ever-changing Further Education market, we compete successfully against c.160 other Awarding Organisations by staying ahead of the curve.

A bit about the job...

With excellent interpersonal skills, you'll be required to offer advice, support and guidance to new and existing customers on our products and services with a view to increasing sales.

Providing a personal service and delivering exceptional customer care, you'll be required to visit customers (further education colleges, private training providers and schools) on a daily basis. You'll develop effective working relationships with new and existing clients and will aim to do whatever you can to make their lives easier. It'll be your responsibility to organise and manage your own activities to reflect regional operational objectives and you'll be expected to contribute to national team meetings to review targets and plan team activities.

A bit about you...

We're looking for a self-motivated and enthusiastic individual with previous field sales experience, ideally within an educational environment. With a strong customer focus, you'll have previously developed and maintained key working relationships and will be keen to provide support and advice wherever you can. Confidence and personality are important and you must be target driven with the desire to create opportunities and maximise sales growth. Due to the nature of the role, a full driving licence is also essential.

Closing Date: 27 November

Permanent Role: Interviews - 10 December 2014
Fixed Term Maternity Cover: Interviews - 8 December 2014


For further information and to apply, please visit: www.ncfe.org.uk/careers/vacancies/business-development-officer

ENGLISH AND MATHS JOBS

WE ARE CONTINUING TO OFFER FREE RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING FOR ALL ENGLISH AND MATHS TEACHING ROLES. GET IN TOUCH WITH HANNAH BELOW FOR MORE INFO



TO ADVERTISE WITH US CALL HANNAH SMITH ON
HANNAH.SMITH@FEWEEK.CO.UK OR 020 81234 778



BCoT

BASINGSTOKE
COLLEGE of
TECHNOLOGY

Foundation and Skills
English Lecturer

Full-time and/or part-time considered
Teaching either GCSE & Functional Skills, or both.
FTE 1.0 £22,961.24 to £32,594.00 per annum

Do you have the skills and expertise to successfully develop the
English skills of young people?

We are a college rapidly improving towards outstanding and are seeking highly experienced English tutors to join our team of staff who deliver English across college.

Experience of working with young people aged 16-18 is essential as well as having the ability to deliver the curriculum creatively. You will have excellent organisational skills and be able to work independently across the college.

Experience of teaching either Functional Skills or GCSE English is essential. Ideally, you will hold a teaching qualification, a relevant degree or equivalent professional qualification, and it is desirable for you to possess a Level 4 subject specialist qualification.

As an experienced teacher, you will be flexible, approachable and preferably be familiar with the current issues and challenges within Further Education. You would be joining a supportive team which has a strong focus on improving standards and achieving success.

*BCoT will offer "New Teachers" a loan to cover the cost of study and obtaining teaching qualifications. Provided the qualification is obtained, repayment of the loan is not required***
*** Terms and conditions apply*


BCoT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its learners, and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure as well as providing proof of right to work in the UK.

BCoT is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our workforce.

Applications will be reviewed on an on-going basis and an appointment made as soon as a suitable candidate is identified.

To apply for this post, please click on the link below:-
https://www.hirewire.co.uk/FE/1053284/THW_JobBoard.aspx

If you wish to send a CV with your application, please remember to click 'upload' after attaching it, otherwise your CV will not be sent to us.



Cronton

Sixth Form College



Cronton Sixth Form College is a highly popular and successful sixth form college conveniently located in Widnes within easy reach of Liverpool, Manchester and Chester. Cronton Sixth Form College currently caters for over 1,300 16-18 students, the majority of whom are studying A-Level or Vocational programmes.


English Teacher


Full Time, Temporary Maternity cover

Up to £35,982

We welcome applications from NQTs. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS Disclosure. Application forms and job descriptions are available on our Website: www.cronton.ac.uk Telephone: 0151 257 2010 E-mail: HRUnit@cronton.ac.uk

Closing date: 12 noon
Wednesday 26th November 2014





A YOUNG PERSON'S COLLEGE

DEVELOPING SKILLS, INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

The City of Stoke on Trent Sixth Form College is a thriving, lively and successful Sixth Form College, committed to social inclusion. In September 2010 we relocated to a new £33 million campus at the heart of the University Quarter of Stoke on Trent, adjacent to Stoke on Trent Railway Station, which is on the mainline from London to Manchester. October 2012 saw the opening of the University Science Centre; all STEM students are taught in this fantastic new facility. The College's mission is 'The young person's college developing skills, inspiring excellence, where students are encouraged to achieve their full personal and academic potential.'

Teacher of Mathematics

(Full Time / Permanent)

To teach in the Maths Department on predominately GCSE courses according to the College needs. The ability to teach pre-GCSE and A-level would be advantageous.

The teaching post would be suitable for an NQT, who are encouraged to apply, or experienced teachers.



Salary will be paid according to the Sixth Form College's Salary Spine for Teachers.

Closing date: Friday 21st November 2014, 12.00pm

For further details and an application form please visit the College's website: www.stokesfc.ac.uk, or email personnel@stokesfc.ac.uk. Alternatively, telephone Personnel on (01782) 854210.

The College is committed to Equal Opportunities. Applications are particularly welcome from members of the ethnic minorities who are currently under represented at the College.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. You should note that an enhanced DBS Disclosure will be required prior to taking up an appointment with the College.





Hartlepool Sixth Form College

Job Vacancy

Hartlepool Sixth Form College has experienced rapid growth. Over the last two years, results have improved significantly and our students make outstanding progress. We are seeking to appoint a specialist teacher to work within our Mathematics provision, with a particular focus upon GCSE Mathematics but also to contribute to our A Level courses.

We are looking for an outstanding teacher with real enthusiasm for their subject who will contribute to the continued development of the Mathematics programmes.

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

(Fixed Term Appointment, 5 January to 31 August 2015
– with the potential to become a permanent post)

We are looking for an energetic, enthusiastic and innovative classroom practitioner to join a team that is committed to improving the potential of its students. You will be responsible for delivering outstanding lessons, encouraging learners and raising standards. The successful candidate will be passionate about teaching and have the ability to inspire young people and colleagues.

Salary Range: Point 1 £21,469 - PSP 3 £36,642

Closing date: 21 November 2014
Interviews planned for: w/c 1 December 2014
Start date: 5 January 2015

The College is an equal opportunities employer committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and expects all staff to share this commitment.

The successful candidate will need to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure via the DBS. For further information please visit our website to download an application pack or alternatively email or telephone

Hartlepool Sixth Form College
Brinkburn, Blakelock Road
Hartlepool, TS25 5PF

Tel: 01429 294444
Email: hsfc@hpoolsfsc.ac.uk
Web: www.hpoolsfsc.ac.uk



Total People

Trainee Maths Teacher needed!

No previous teaching experience needed.

Total People are one of the largest suppliers of work-based learning in the North West of England. On our last Ofsted inspection we were awarded a 'Grade 2', placing us in the top 15% of training providers in the country. Currently supporting over 1800 employers and 4500 learners throughout Cheshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and the Midlands.

This position of Trainee Maths Teacher is an ideal opportunity for anyone who would like a career in teaching, putting maths knowledge gained into practice whilst undertaking a recognised teaching qualification with us.

You will work towards helping learners who have not achieved a GCSE A* - C in mainstream education, to improve their maths skills and achieve a higher level of qualification and in return we will provide the training that will equip you to deliver GCSE maths.

Visit our website for more information & to apply!

 01606 734024

 /totalpeople

 @totalpeople

 hr@totalpeople.co.uk

 jobs.totalpeople.co.uk

SCHOOL OF
FOUNDATION
STUDIES

Vacancy: English Tutor (Part-time)
Hours: 25 per Week (Term Time Only)
Contract Type: Fixed Term
Salary: £21.86 plus 15.4% holiday pay (£3.37) per hour
Closing Date: 9am Monday 24 November 2014
Ref: 2382

We are looking for an experienced English Tutor (Part-time) to join our vibrant foundation learning team at RACC, teaching English for 25 hours per week. You will teach GCSE and Foundation English to a diverse range of adult learners and a small group of 16-18 year olds, enabling these learners to reach their potential.

To apply, please download and complete an application form from our website; www.racc.ac.uk/jobs and return and to hr@racc.ac.uk by the above stated closing date for your application to be considered.



Visiting Tutor English - Talent Pool

Hackney Community College is entering an exciting and challenging time.

We are looking for a dynamic English teacher to deliver Functional Skills English to students on our vocational courses and help them progress to GCSE level. The successful candidate will possess:

- Experience of teaching Functional Skills English to a range of age groups and levels in an FE context.
- The ability to use a variety of teaching strategies and contextualise to meet the needs of learners on different courses.
- A commitment to providing a high standard of education for our students.

In return we offer Family friendly policies, ICAS employee assistance programme and a contributory pension scheme.

The College is committed to safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. We make sure that our workforce is reflective of the community and welcome applications from all sections of the community.

All applicants should use the personal specification to apply for this job demonstrating their ability to meet all the requirements in the personal specification. This can be found on our website: www.hackney.ac.uk

Closing date: 30th November 2014

Shoreditch Campus
Falkirk Street
London E1 6HQ
www.hackney.ac.uk





Lecturer A - A Level
Mathematics, Wigan

Salary: Annual Salary up to £31,821
Location: Wigan
Contract type: Full Time – 37 Hours Per Week
Contract term: Permanent

Now would be an exciting time to join Wigan & Leigh College.

We are seeking to appoint creative and qualified individuals to teach Mathematics with one post initially at A Level with a view to delivering across all achievement levels. We are also looking to recruit a Maths specialist to deliver Functional Skills as part of a new cross College English and Maths team. Applicants need to be committed to working in this setting with our students to achieve positive outcomes with them. Applicants should possess a Degree in Mathematics (or other relevant subject) and a teaching qualification. You will need to be an outstanding teacher who has high expectations of learners and of yourself and who can enthuse and motivate 16-19 year old learners.

For more information on this vacancy or to complete an application form, please visit our website:
www.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/job-vacancies

The College reserves the right to interview for this post should we receive suitable candidates prior to the closing date

Closing Date: Friday 21 November 2014



FE Week

FE Week : The only newspaper dedicated to further education and skills

The dedicated place to advertise your vacancies

FE Week has fast become the primary source of news for professionals working within further education and skills, and each week provides a large selection of FE jobs in print and online.

The newspaper is a superb platform from which to engage with potential applicants for your vacancies. As the only newspaper dedicated entirely to the learning and skills sector, your recruitment adverts will effectively reach and engage with our niche audience.

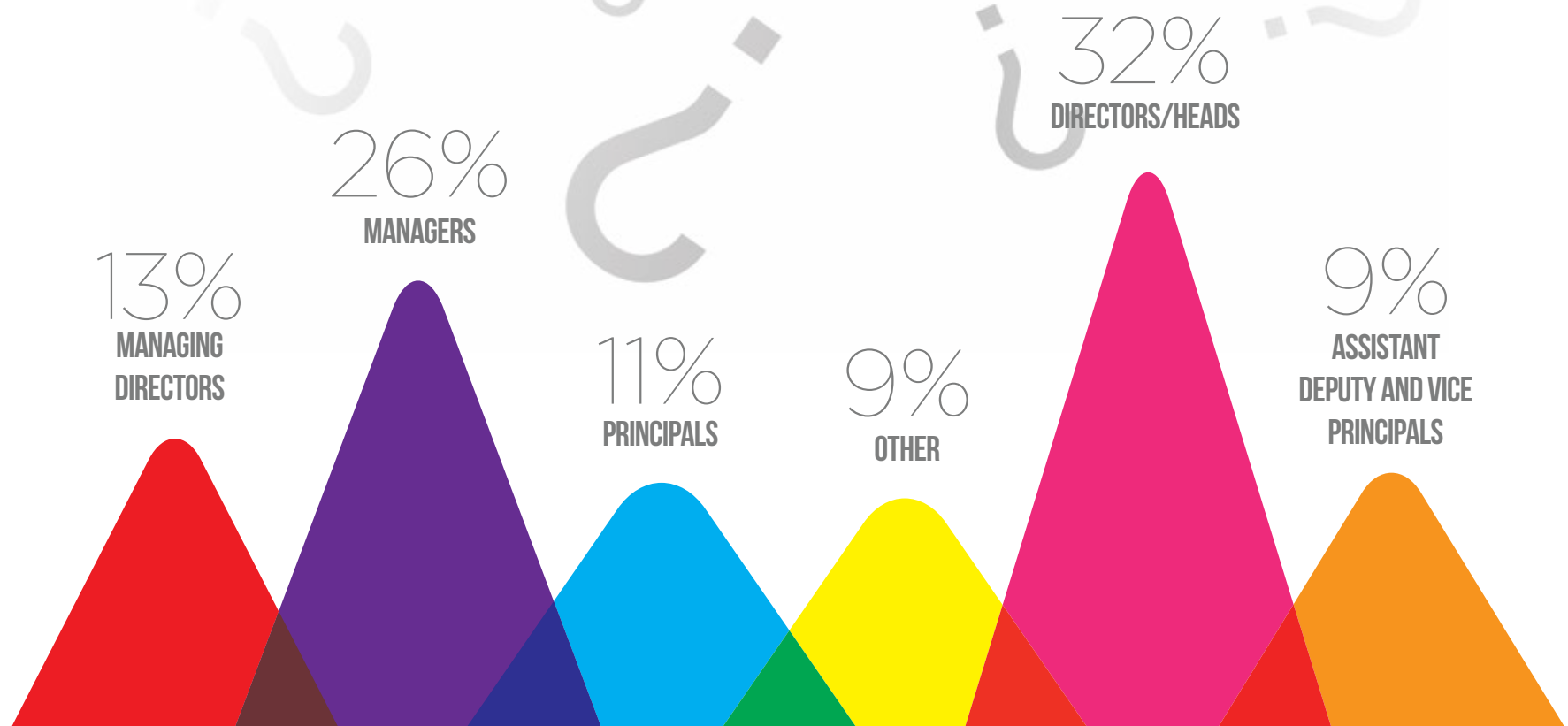
Our in-house team are here to offer you a wide range of creative solutions to help advertise your job role. Your account manager will work with you

to ensure that your advert looks great and gives off the right message to potential candidates.

Print recruitment advertising starts from £300, for a 3 x 5 advert. All rates include a featured online listing, ensuring that your advert has the widest possible reach, and there is no extra charge for composite adverts.

We understand that a successful and expedient recruitment campaign is essential to any organisation. We aim to provide a quick turnaround when it comes to designing print adverts and uploading jobs online.

Who reads FE Week ?



TO PLACE YOUR NEXT RECRUITMENT ADVERT WITH FE WEEK, CONTACT HANNAH ON 020 81234 778



PREPARING LEARNERS FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

While no qualification can guarantee job offers, completing a Cambridge Technical that has been designed and developed with industry will certainly help.

Cambridge Technicals –
available at Levels 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Attending the AoC conference?
Visit us on stand 58 to find out more.

ocr.org.uk/cambridgetechnicals



OCR
Oxford Cambridge and RSA

FE Week Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

		4						
2		3	8		7			
	6		9			3		
			3		9	7		4
	2						9	
4		6	2		5			
		8			6		1	
			4		3	8		5
						4		

Difficulty:
EASY

						3		8
				5		4		1
4					8		9	
		2			6		4	
	6						2	
	4		9			7		
	5		3					6
6		1		2				
8		4						

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

8	1	5	7	4	2	6	3	9
2	4	6	8	9	3	1	5	7
3	9	7	1	6	5	4	2	8
6	7	9	3	5	1	2	8	4
4	8	1	6	2	7	5	9	3
5	2	3	4	8	9	7	6	1
1	3	2	5	7	8	9	4	6
7	5	4	9	3	6	8	1	2
9	6	8	2	1	4	3	7	5

Difficulty:
EASY

5	3	8	2	1	4	7	9	6
1	4	7	9	3	6	5	2	8
9	2	6	7	5	8	3	4	1
3	8	2	6	7	9	4	1	5
7	9	4	5	8	1	6	3	2
6	1	5	4	2	3	9	8	7
8	6	3	1	4	5	2	7	9
4	7	9	8	6	2	1	5	3
2	5	1	3	9	7	8	6	4

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference
to WIN an FE Week mug!



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an FE Week mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.